The World's Leading Mystery Magazine

ELLERY QUEEN'S Mystery Magazine

DECEMBER 35¢ 1962

NEW stories about:

the stock market
skindiving
art fraud
horse racing
robots
off-Broadway theater
...and murder

HUGH PENTECOST

THOMAS WALSH

THEODORE STURGEON

JACOB HAY

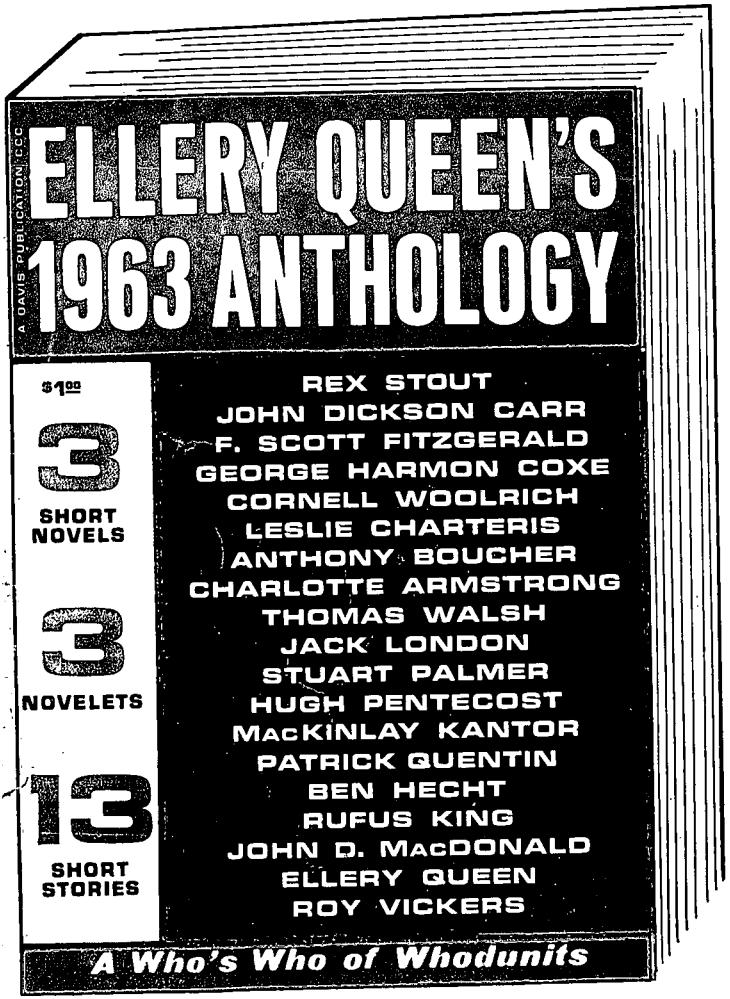
JOHN DURHAM

JIM KJELGAARD

TALMAGE POWELL

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOW ON SALE



ELLERY QUEEN'S 1963 ANTHOLOGY, the new edition of the world's greatest mysteries is now on sale.

Here is your opportunity to order your copies—no chance of missing a single thrilling story in this 1963 edition.

Mail the Reservation Form, with your payment, now. Your copy will be rushed to you.

You're in for some of the finest reading you've ever enjoyed.

Only $1 per copy.

RESERVATION FORM

ELLERY QUEEN'S 1963 ANTHOLOGY / 505 PARK AVE. / NEW YORK 22, N.

Please send me _____ copies of ELLERY QUEEN'S 1963 ANTHOLOG
I am enclosing $1.00 for each copy ($1.25 in Canada).

Name _____
(Please print)

Address _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The World's Leading Mystery Magazine

ELLERY QUEEN'S *Mystery Magazine*

***including* BLACK MASK MAGAZINE**

10 editions: U.S.A., Australian, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese

DETECTIVE STORIES

THE STOCK MARKET DETECTIVE	*James M. Ullman*	5
DEATH IN THE HARBOR	*Edward D. Hoch*	19
HOMECOMING	*Thomas Walsh*	50
SOMEBODY CARES	*Talmage Powell*	77
ROBOTICIDE SQUAD	*Richard Banks*	102

CRIME STORIES

A FAIR BET	*Jim Kjelgaard*	34
THE REFORMATION OF FOGARTY	*Jacob Hay*	38
THE MAN WITH THE SIXTEEN BEARDS	*Hugh Pentecost*	63
IN THE HOSPITAL	*Theodore Sturgeon*	100
TIGER	*John Durham*	116

EQMM "FIRST STORY"

TEAR A PASSION TO TATTERS	*Raleigh Bond*	89
MYSTERY HARDCOVERS OF THE MONTH		49
MYSTERY PAPERBACKS OF THE MONTH		49
BEST MYSTERIES OF THE MONTH	*Anthony Boucher*	87
INDEX TO VOLUME FORTY		130

PUBLISHER: *B. G. Davis* **EDITOR:** *Ellery Queen*

Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine, Vol. 40, No. 2, Whole No. 229, DEC. 1962. Published monthly by Davis Publications, Inc. at 35¢ a copy. Annual subscription $4.00 in U.S.A. and possessions and Canada; $5.00 in the Pan American Union; $5.00 in all other countries. Publication Office, 10 Ferry St., Concord, N. H. Editorial and General Offices, 505 Park Ave., New York 22, N. Y. Change of address notices, undelivable copies, orders for subscriptions, and other mail items are to be sent to 505 Park Ave., New York 22, N. Y. Second-Class postage paid a Concord, N. H. *© 1962 by Davis Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Protection secured under the Universal Copyright Convention and the Pan American Copyright Convention.* *Printed in U.S.A. Submissions must be accompanied by stamped self-addressed envelope; the Publisher assumes no responsibility for return of unsolicited manuscripts.*

JOEL DAVIS, *Assistant Publisher* PAUL W. FAIRMAN, *Managing Editor*
MELVIN FLAMM, *Business Manager* CONSTANCE DI RIENZO, *Executive Editorial Secretary*
FRANK TAGGART, *Art Director*

LICENSED FOR PERSONAL USE
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

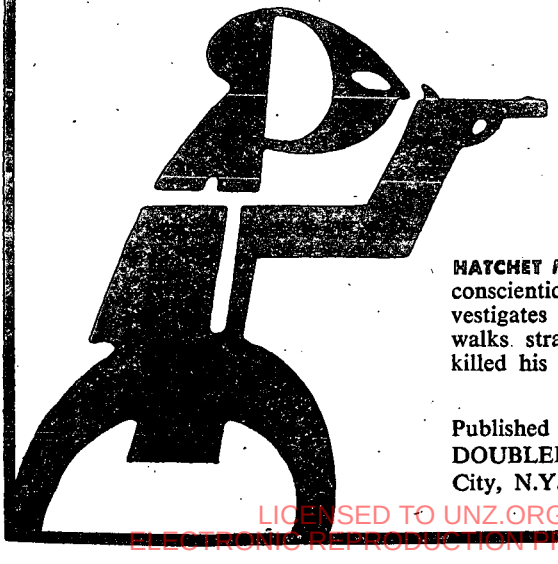
CRÈME DE LA CRIME

THE BIRTHDAY ⊙ *E. L. Withers.* David Casswell's twenty-first birthday party seems to be a celebration he'll never forget. Then it starts to look like a party he'll never even survive. $3.50

FIND THE WOMAN ⊙ *Doris Miles Disney.* Dr. Chandler was healthy, wealthy, and amorous—until he underestimated the power of a woman with her mind on blackmail and murder. $3.50

DEATH AND CHICANERY ⊙ *Philip MacDonald.* A quartet of gems by a mystery master—including an off-beat tale set in Outer Mongolia and a brilliant shocker about a successful marriage. $3.50

BORN VICTIM ⊙ *Hillary Waugh.* A pretty teen-ager, home alone, hears the doorbell ring . . . and Connecticut Police Chief Fred Fellows fears she may have opened the door to murder. $3.50



SNOW JOB ⊙ *Malcolm Gair.* Accidents will happen—but young Whit Ruysdael is sure his maiden aunt has been murdered in the Austrian Alps—and he has the money and the detective to prove it. $3.50

HATCHET MAN ⊙ *Winfred Van Atta.* A conscientious company accountant investigates a mysterious death—and walks straight towards the trap that killed his colleague. $3.50

Published for the **CRIME CLUB** by DOUBLEDAY & CO., INC., Garden City, N.Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDITORS' FILE CARD

AUTHOR: **JAMES M. ULLMAN**

TITLE: ***The Stock Market Detective***

TYPE: Detective Story

DETECTIVES: Michael Dane James and Ted Bennett

LOCALE: United States

TIME: The Present

COMMENTS: *Someone was secretly buying Trakker common stock. A proxy fight? Control of the company? . . . Meet a new kind of detective —a specialist in industrial crime.*

THE PRICE OF COMMON STOCK IN Trakker Trucking Corporation began rising in February. Its quotation on the regional exchange, where it enjoyed trading privileges, went from 12 to 15 by the end of the month.

In March it advanced to a high of 17; in April to 19; and in May to 22½. Meaning that if you had been adroit enough to buy at the February low and sell at the May high, you would have nearly doubled your money in four months.

It was at this point that John Trakker, president, board chairman, and founder of the firm, discussed the matter with his attorney, who in turn referred him to Michael Dane James.

James drove from New York City to Trakker's New Jersey headquarters. He was ushered into Trakker's office at 11 o'clock on a Tuesday morning.

The salutations were perfunctory. Then Trakker said, "I've never dealt with your service before, Mr. James, so I don't know quite how to begin."

"What's your problem?" James asked. "We simple souls in what is luridly termed business and industrial espionage believe in plain talk."

"It's Trakker common. Our stock moved from 12 to a top of 22½ since early this year."

"That should make you happy."

"It would—if I knew why it went up so fast. But, frankly, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stock isn't worth what it's selling for now. It may be in a few years, but there's been nothing in our recent operations to explain the rise. No big earnings-increase, no merger planned—not even one rumored.

"In that case," James said, "somebody is probably trying to move in on you. When they get enough shares, they'll ask for representation on the board. Or maybe for the whole hog, and if you don't give in they'll start a proxy fight."

"Could be. But so far we haven't heard a whisper about who these people are or what they have in mind. None of our bigger stockholders has been approached. However, we do know this new group is buying heavily. According to our transfer agent, many of the orders come from Chicago. Our books show that a lot of the stock sold recently is held in street names by a few Chicago brokerage houses. The brokers are acting for one or more customers, but in the record books it's the brokers who own the stock, and the identity of the true owners is hidden.

"There are channels I could pursue," Trakker went on, "to pin down their identity further—through our underwriters, for instance—but even they could go only so far. What I want, Mr. James, is as thorough—and confidential—an investigation as is humanly possible."

"You have the names of these Chicago brokerage houses?"

Trakker handed over a list of three names. "We're a relatively small operation as publicly held corporations go," he explained. "I started this company after the first World War with one truck and $200. We went public in the late Thirties. I, my family, and some close associates hold about twenty per cent of the outstanding shares—enough to maintain control of management, because our revenues and earnings have kept going up and the price of Trakker common has, too. Our stockholders have never had reason to complain. I built this company from scratch, Mr. James. I don't want to see a crew of raiders hurt it or take our stockholders to the cleaners. The big rise in the stock's price this year has already brought us more attention from the speculators than is good for us."

"We'll see what we can do," James said.

"How will you go about it?" Trakker asked.

"That," James replied, "I'm afraid you'll have to leave to our discretion."

James drove back to New York and told his secretary to locate Ted Bennett. She made some telephone calls and found him in a brokerage house boardroom. "Pack your bag," James said. "We're going to Chicago on the four o'clock plane."

"Can't we wait until the market closes?" Bennett protested.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Must be back here for a big client interview Thursday afternoon," James replied. "I'm going to try to set it up for you in Chicago, then let you finish the job."

Bennett never asked, and James never said, what the job in Chicago was all about. Both knew better than to get specific over James's office telephone. James had his best sound man run a check on the telephones every month or so, but there was always a good chance someone was tapping the line anyway. James would tell Bennett about the Trakker case on the plane.

They checked in at a Loop hotel —James a broad-shouldered, slightly pot-bellied, square-faced man of medium height and middle age, wearing horn-rimmed glasses and sporting a gray crewcut; Bennett, very tall, lean, and tousle-headed, looking younger than his 35 years. Bennett stopped at the cigar stand on their way to the room and bought a Chicago newspaper containing the final stock quotations. He sprawled on one of the beds in their suite and began thumbing through the paper, while James consulted the phone book, picked up the telephone, and began dialing.

"Down another half point," Bennett moaned. "And me still stuck with 400 shares of that dog."

"If you'd spend as much time working as you do playing the market," James observed, "you'd get rich."

"If I'd sold everything I owned and bought Trakker common in February," Bennett said, "I could have bought me a little old island somewhere and retired, instead of hiring out to you by the day whenever you land a job you can't handle alone."

James reached his party, the financial editor of a Chicago newspaper. "Hi, Ed. It's Mike James. You still want to do that inside piece on industrial espionage you asked me about the last time you were in New York? Okay, okay, all you have to do in return is put me in touch with a couple of knowledgeable people in the brokerage business here. Why don't I drop over tomorrow afternoon? Swell."

He hung up.

"Now what?" Bennett asked.

"Now we eat lightly and get a good night's sleep. Tomorrow morning I'm going to nose around the boardroom of the brokerage house that holds most of the newly bought Trakker common, while you'll go out and line up a good sound man. I have a hunch we'll need one."

James strolled into the boardroom the next morning with a newspaper under his arm. It was a big room, with more than a dozen customers' men and plenty of idlers standing about. As in most big boardrooms, you could hang

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

around all day if you wished, watching the tape from the New York and the American stock exchanges.

Trakker common, of course, being handled on neither the New York nor the American stock exchanges, was traded on a regional exchange. To get a quote on the stock, a customers' man handling the account would either have to make a phone call or call out and ask someone else in the office to get the quote for him. So James drifted around the big room, waiting to hear someone mention Trakker common out loud.

In two hours several customers' men did so. The one most concerned with the stock, however, seemed to be an Ivy League type with a desk two rows up from the gallery. Between 10 a.m. and 11:55 a.m. he called for a quote on Trakker common three times. At 11:55 a.m. James stood close enough to hear the man dial a phone number and say, "Trakker's down almost another point, but they say it's firming now. Let's see. You got one order in for 1000 shares at 20 and another for 1000 at 19. The way it looks, it could get away from you. Yeah. Sure. All right, I'll get you 100 at the market and put in for another 500 if it goes down to 21."

James moved away. He remained in the boardroom another few minutes and then left to meet Bennett in a cafeteria.

"Well," James said, "I've found the customers' man who seems to do the most business in Trakker common. He gets a quote every hour on the hour. Maybe he's dealing with one of the big buyers. Why don't you drop in there this afternoon and open an account with this fellow? You find a sound man?"

"I did. He runs a detective agency and has all the help we could possibly need."

"Great."

James went off to be interviewed by his friend the financial editor. Bennett strolled over to the brokerage house. He had no difficulty spotting the Ivy League customers' man James had described.

Bennett lounged about until the man rose and made his way to a side door leading to a Men's Room. When the man returned five minutes later, Bennett got in his way.

"I beg your pardon," Bennett said, "but could I open an account here?"

"Glad to help you," the man said warmly. "My name is Charley Watson. I'm what's called a customers' representative."

"Oh, I know about that, I already own some stocks," Bennett said. "I'm based in New York—have an account with a house there. But my business is going to take me to Chicago regularly for a while and I'd like to have an ac-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

count here, too. I've never been in Chicago before."

Watson led Bennett to his desk. Bennett pulled out a check book and casually wrote out a check for $5000. It was almost every cent in his checking account. He wanted to make a good impression on Watson because, if all else failed, he would have to ask Watson outright who was buying the Trakker stock. He handed the check over.

"I'd like to open the account with this."

"Well!" Watson said, obviously not unhappy to meet a man who could write a check for $5000. "Did you have any specific stocks in mind?"

"I was wondering if you could suggest some. You boys in Chicago probably have information on stocks we don't hear much about in New York."

Watson reeled off a few which Bennett recognized as the current favorites of many advisory services. Trakker was not among them. Bennett shook his head.

"I don't think those are for me. I'm a single man, Watson. I can afford to take a flyer on something risky if there's a chance for a quick gain."

Watson was interrupted by a telephone call from a customer. Bennett began filling out the form. After talking to his customer, Watson looked at his watch—it was exactly two o'clock—and called another number.

"Charley Watson," he said. "How's Trakker? 23 bid, a quarter asked? Thanks." He hung up, turned to Bennett. "Can you excuse me another minute? I have to call a guy who's real hot on this stock."

"Go ahead."

Watson dialed. "Hello? Mr. Boston, please, it's Charley Watson. Hello, Roy? Trakker is 23 and strong. It really bounced back. Oh, you heard already? All right, we'll keep the orders for 1,000 at 19 and 20, and 500 at 21. Yeah, we'll wait and see tomorrow." He hung up again.

"Trakker?" Bennett said. "What's that?"

"Trakker Trucking," Watson said. "It's gone 'way up in the last few months. It's gone up so much, though, you'd maybe be taking a big chance if you bought at this price."

Bennett was inclined to agree. It was also significant that Watson didn't push the stock. He handed the new-account application over to Watson, rose, and extended his hand. "Well, thanks a lot. You people get my check cleared, and I'll be in later this week." Watson gave Bennett a business card and Bennett left.

Bennett went to a drugstore booth and phoned the newspaper. He asked for the financial editor and got the financial editor's secretary.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"A Mr. James from New York had an appointment with your boss this afternoon," Bennett said. "Is he still there?"

"Just a minute."

James came on the line. "What luck, Ted?"

"Very good," Bennett said. "The customers' man checks on Trakker's price every hour or so for somebody named Roy Boston. This Boston must be the same guy you heard him talking to this morning. A lot of buy orders for Trakker, and no sell orders. Boston must have other sources of information, too—at two o'clock he knew the price of Trakker before our customers' man did. Maybe Boston has accounts with other houses. When the man called Boston I watched him dial and I wrote the number down."

"Why don't you check the number out? In a couple of minutes I'm going to the Tavern Club, where Ed is going to introduce me to his financial friends. I know they'll just love to hear about what happened when we installed the two-way mirror in the Ladies' Rest Room while investigating factory pilferage."

James hung up. Bennett put another dime in the slot and phoned the sound man he had hired that morning, a private detective named Morgan. "Listen, Morgan, I got a phone number. Can you find out who it belongs to?" He read out the number.

In less than two minutes Morgan was back on the line. "It's Victor Investments, address on LaSalle Street."

"Thanks."

Bennett stepped out of the booth long enough to drink two cups of coffee, smoke a cigarette, and look over *The Wall Street Journal*. Then he went back to the booth and had James paged at the Tavern Club.

"The number belongs to Victor Investments, a LaSalle Street firm," Bennett said.

"Nice work," James said. "After a couple martinis I'll ask my new friends here what they know about the outfit. Not much more you can do today, Bennett. Why don't you see a movie or something? I'll meet you in our hotel bar at eleven tonight."

At one minute after eleven James walked into the hotel bar and sat down in a rear booth beside Bennett, who had been trying unsuccessfully to read *Barron's* in the dim light. Bennett folded the financial paper and stuck it into his coat pocket. James ordered a beer.

"Nice fellas, Ed's LaSalle Street friends," James said. "None of 'em knew of any legitimate operators here buying in on Trakker, which eliminates a lot of possibilities. Now about Victor Investments."

James downed a big swallow of beer. "It turned out one of Ed's pals was on the Notre Dame team

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that clobbered us in '35. Claims he gave me a bloody nose in the third quarter, but I don't remember it. Anyway, this guy comes from an old-line Chicago financial family and he's a big wheel in the trust department of a bank. After the Tavern Club, he and Ed and I had dinner at a key club where the girls go practically naked."

"A real hard day's work," Bennett grinned.

"It requires a specialized talent, admit it," James said. "A surly fellow like you would never get to first base with these top-level guys. Anyway, I found out as much in six hours of socializing as you would have learned in six days of poking around the offices of Victor Investments with your sound man and his tape recorders and telephone taps and whatnots."

James finished his beer before he continued.

"Victor Investments is a little shop run by a man named Thomas Conn. Roy Boston, the man you heard your broker talking to, is Conn's errand boy, just out of the Harvard Business School. Conn's been around the financial district for years in one capacity or another, but he didn't really come into his own until the mid-1950s. Only a few people know it, but the reason he's been doing so well lately is that he's handling investments for his brother-in-law."

"Who's that?"

"An attorney named Jason Arnold. If Victor Investments is buying a lot of Trakker stock for somebody, the chances are it's for a client or clients represented by Jason Arnold."

"Who are Arnold's clients?"

"That," James said, "is what you'll have to find out. Me, I'm jetting back to New York tomorrow morning. This client I'm going to talk to is a billion-dollar corporation, and if I can convince it that my services are required despite its 80-man security department, there'll be some lucrative work in it for you, too."

"You think there's any point to my tapping Victor Investments?"

"Sure, just in case they have other clients buying Trakker," James said. "But better concentrate on this lawyer, Jason Arnold. Is that sound man you lined up any good?"

"Good as they come," Bennett said. "I got his name from our man in New York."

'Tape me a report and send it air mail special every day," James said.

James flew back to New York the next morning. Bennett and Morgan went to work. Jason Arnold's office was on a lower floor in a big Loop building. Over the week-end Morgan bribed the building superintendent and set up a tap leading from the control box in the building's basement to a tape recorder in an unused storeroom of a building across the alley.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The tape recorder didn't have to be manned constantly; it would go on automatically the moment anyone in Arnold's office picked up the telephone. A similar tap was arranged for the telephones at Victor Investments. For good measure, they put a tap on Arnold's home phone. That tap led from the terminal box on the line, in the alley behind Arnold's home, to a recorder in a vacant store at the end of the block.

After four days of listening, Bennett learned these pertinent facts which he sent to James:

Victor Investments had substantial buy orders in with three Chicago brokerage houses for Trakker common—all to be held, if and when executed, in street names.

Thomas Conn, the owner of Victor Investments, telephoned Jason Arnold, his brother-in-law, at four o'clock every afternoon to report the number, if any, and the price of any Trakker shares purchased for Arnold that day.

At dusk on the eleventh day after the taps were set up, Bennett called from a telephone booth in Chicago's Loop to a telephone booth in New York, where he knew James would be waiting.

"Arnold's our boy," Bennett said. "We'll keep the taps on him for a while longer, but if he's in regular communication with the big buyer he represents, I don't think it's by telephone. At least, not from his office phones."

"There's a fair amount of money involved in these purchases," James said. "You'd think the buyer would want regular reports, at least weekly. Unless Arnold is buying for his own account and not for a client."

"I'm checking Arnold from all angles," Bennett replied. "He may have a piece of what's going on, but I'm pretty sure he doesn't have that much money to throw around. He's acting for someone else, all right. I have learned one thing that may be significant."

"What's that?"

"Well, from the telephone calls we've monitored, we've assembled a good list of Arnold clients. One way or another, a couple of dozen businesses. My sound man here is pretty hep to local goings-on. Four of the clients—a motel, a plush restaurant, a discount store, and a medium-sized, privately held manufacturing plant—are operated by groups with criminal associations."

"You think Arnold is fronting for underworld money?"

"It's the best so far. For a lawyer who wasn't getting anywhere for years, he sure started moving fast back in '55. His first important client was that criminally-owned manufacturing plant. It was involved in a big litigation over patents. After Arnold won the case for them he was off and running."

"What's your next step?"

"We're tailing Arnold, but he

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

leads a pretty regular life. Comes straight to the office in the morning and goes straight home at night to his wife and two daughters. All we get on that home-phone tap is teenagers. So we're going to bug his office."

"If I'd known it would cost this much," James said, "I'd have sent our own sound man out there and got the work done wholesale. Need any help?"

"It's all routine so far. I'll holler if I need you. Land that big corporate client?"

"We're still dickering."

"Good luck."

Over the next week-end they bugged Arnold's office. In the guise of a workman, one of Morgan's men got into the office long enough to plant a transistorized wireless microphone behind a framed diploma over Arnold's desk. The receiver was installed beside the tape recorder in the storeroom of the building across the alley.

"Think the signal will reach?" Bennett asked Morgan.

"Might be a little faint, but it should be audible."

"I'll man it myself," Bennett decided.

Bennett was crouched in the storeroom with his earphones on when Arnold arrived for work at nine the following Monday morning. Bennett remained there until 11:30, when Arnold said to his secretary, "I'm going to lunch, and then to court. I'll be back about three."

Arnold went downstairs to the lobby, where a private detective on Morgan's staff picked up his trail. Bennett left the storeroom and walked the few blocks to the brokerage house, where he took a chair beside Charley Watson's desk. Bennett read Watson's copy of *The Wall Street Journal,* bought 200 shares of Intercosmic Enterprises, and sold 100 of Jet Ventures, Inc.

"You did all right on that," Watson said. "Listen. You've been a pretty good customer of mine. You know that Trakker Trucking stock you asked me about the first day you were in here? It's up to 25 now, and I got a big customer with a lot of buy orders still in. As long as this screwball is in a buying mood, I don't think the price of that stock will go down very far. Every time it goes down some, he moves in and knocks it back up. There aren't many shares outstanding and any little action moves it. Want to take a chance?"

"Thanks," Bennett said, "I'd rather not. See you tomorrow."

He dropped into a drugstore, where he ate a peanut butter sandwich and drank a malted milk. He was back in the storeroom with the earphones on at 2:47 p.m.

Arnold returned to his office at 3:04 p.m. At 4:36 he began dictating a letter to his secretary that made Bennett sit up and reach

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quickly for paper and pencil.

"Send this to Jerry," Arnold said. "We bought only 2,000 shares of Trakker last week, since the price seems high and I think if we wait another week it will drop back to 20 or so. The stock we bought last week cost $45,637.19, including commissions, and duplicate purchase slips are enclosed. The stock is being allocated to accounts as follows: 200 shares, Joseph Lefitowa; 200 shares, Mrs. Joseph Lefitowa; 200 shares, Harold Burns; 200 shares, Carl Steadley; 200 shares, Anthony Glovson; 200 shares, Erwin Glovson; 300 shares, Frank Bannerman, and 500 shares, Zack Mucho. This gives you control of a total of 63,900 shares of Trakker common. Yours truly, and so forth. I know it's late, Miss Dean, but I'd appreciate it if you'd get this out in this evening's mail. I want it to reach Riverview by tomorrow morning."

Bennett heard the sound of a door closing as the secretary left the inner office. "Jerry," who lived in a place called Riverview, was obviously the mystery man behind the orders for Trakker common. But Jerry who? And Riverview what? The chances were slim that Bennett would find out by sitting there with his earphones on. It might be weeks before he learned any more from the tap.

Bennett left the storeroom and walked around the block four times. It would probably take the girl about that long to type the letter and address the envelope, and give the letter to Arnold for his signature. Arnold always left the office at 5 p.m. The girl's custom was to leave a few minutes later.

At 5:01 p.m. Bennett walked into the lobby of Arnold's building. He noted that a Morgan man had just wandered to the cigar stand, ready to follow Arnold out.

Arnold stepped out of the elevator at 5:03 p.m. and Bennett stepped into one. He went to Arnold's floor, where he loitered, pretending to be looking for a name on the office doors.

At 5:07 p.m. Arnold's secretary stepped out of the office with a cluster of letters in one hand and her purse in the other. As she approached the mail chute Bennett stumbled awkwardly against her. His arm came down hard, knocking the letters to the floor.

"Ooops—so sorry," he exclaimed, grinning his best sheepish grin. He steadied her and then quickly began gathering up the mail. There were nine letters. There was no addressee who could be "Jerry" in any form, and only one address with a "Riverview" destination. This envelope read: "Box 68, Riverview, Wisconsin."

"You all right?" Bennett asked. He gave the girl the letters.

She said, "You ought to watch where you're going," and thumbed through the mail to be sure all the letters were there.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I'm sorry," Bennett repeated, and backed away. She dumped the mail down the chute and walked hurriedly to the elevator bank.

When he got out of the building, Bennett went to a cigar store and phoned Morgan, the sound man. "Call off your dogs."

"The job over?"

"Maybe yes, maybe no. But I've learned all I want to for now, and I'm leaving. Send the bill to my friend in New York."

"Check. It's been a pleasure."

"Me, too. You're a real pro."

Bennett cabbed to his hotel. From the suite he arranged to rent a car. Then he spoke into his tape recorder as he packed.

"Mike: The big buyer is someone named Jerry. All I know about Jerry is that he's reachable at Box 68, Riverview, Wisconsin. So I'm going there to see who takes the letter out of the box. So far the buyer controls about 64,000 shares of Trakker common. The names of some of the owners-of-record behind the street names include—let me check my notes—yeah Joseph Lefitowa, his wife, Harold Burns, Carl Steadley, Anthony Glovson—no 'e' after the 'v'—Erwin Glovson, Frank Bannerman, and Zack Mucho. The names don't mean anything to me. Maybe they will to you or your client."

Bennett placed the spool of tape in an air-mail special envelope already stamped and addressed to James in New York, checked out, dropped the envelope in a mailbox, and took a cab to the rent-a-car depot, where he picked up a big sedan. Since there was always a chance that unknown parties might check his movements, he didn't ask for directions in the depot.

In a Chicago suburb Bennett got off the expressway and found a service station. He selected road maps of Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, gave the attendant a dollar, drove down the block, parked, and opened the Wisconsin map. Riverview was a "Pop. 4,000" west of Madison.

There was a diner across the street from the Riverview Post Office, and Bennett sat in it the next morning drinking coffee and waiting for the Post Office to open. The drive had taken only a few hours, and he had spent the night in a motel. Riverview nestled in a popular resort area, but it was still out-of-season and the streets were relatively empty.

When the Post Office opened, Bennett waited a few minutes, then went in and bought a dollar's worth of stamps. He paid for them with a $10 bill. While the clerk made change Bennett located Box 68. He moved close enough to see four letters inside. The one on top was from Jason Arnold.

Bennett went out and got into the car, which he had parked in front of the Post Office. He pulled

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED.

up until he was able to see the tier of boxes that included 68. Then he settled back to wait.

Twice people approached the tier and each time Bennett checked, but he saw that the contents of Box 68 remained untouched. At 9:30 a.m. the news agency down the street opened and Bennett left the car long enough to buy a copy of *The Wall Street Journal*. When he returned, the letters were still in Box 68. Bennett got back in the car and began to read the paper.

At 9:57 a.m. a battered station wagon screeched to a stop behind Bennett's car, and a youth in blue jeans and sweatshirt got out and went into the Post Office. He unlocked a box, removed its contents, and came out. Bennett investigated; Box 68 was empty.

He took from his pocket the stamps he had bought earlier and held them in his hand while he returned to the rented car, as though he had just bought them. The station wagon was rounding a corner two blocks away.

Bennett drove the two blocks and around the corner. The station wagon was far down the street, heading into open country. Bennett stepped on the gas.

The station wagon barreled for about five miles at seventy per and then turned into a narrow, tree-lined, blacktop road. By the time Bennett reached the turn-off, the wagon was gone.

He drove along slowly and passed, in order, a small tavern, three farms, a big roadhouse that advertised *ENTERTAINMENT, BEER AND CONTINENTAL CUISINE,* a resort hotel—Bennett crept past, but failed to spot the station wagon—and then several estates. At the third estate he saw the station wagon parked about fifty yards up the private drive alongside a Cadillac, a Jaguar, and a Mercedes Benz. He drove on past two more estates, turned around, and drove all the way back to the little tavern near the highway. He parked and went inside.

The open-faced boy behind the bar apparently saw nothing unusual in a man's ordering beer at 10 o'clock in the morning. It was a very good local beer; and Bennett drank three bottles, while discussing major league baseball with the boy, before getting down to business.

"By the way," Bennett said, "those are some pretty swanky homes down the road. Folks here must make out pretty good."

The boy laughed.

"Those ain't local people. They're big shots from Chicago. They own that roadhouse down the way and half the bars and resorts around here. They bought up all this land in the '30s, when it was a twentieth of what it's worth now."

"Who owns the big mansion? The third house from the hotel?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"That's the big man himself. Fats Manning. You must of heard of him."

Indeed Bennett had. Gerald "Fats" Manning was one of the most powerful Syndicate gangsters in the United States. Gerald Manning, then, was "Jerry"—the man behind the group buying into Trakker Trucking.

John Trakker studied James's report.

"Zack Mucho," Trakker said. "I remember him very well. He approached me six years ago and offered to buy all my shares in the company—claimed he wanted to go into the trucking business. I had him checked and the report was that, while he had no criminal record, he was connected with a lot of people who did have. I told him to go to hell. I didn't think of him when I called you in because over the years a lot of other people have offered to buy me out, and I've turned them down, too."

"The others on the list," James said, "Lefitowa, Burns, Steadley, and so forth—they're all like Mucho—fronts for gangster money. They jump like puppets when Manning pulls the strings. The underworld has millions lying around in cash, and the boys are wising up and putting their blood money to work. Someone—probably Mucho—spotted your company a long time ago as a nice little investment. Profitable—and the mob can always find unadvertised uses for an interstate trucking company. So Fats Manning has one of his reputable attorneys, Jason Arnold, buy the stock through his brother-in-law's firm, Victor Investments. The brokerage house holds the stock under a street name for Victor, then Victor Investments holds it under the equivalent of the same thing for Arnold. Arnold apportions it out to a number of underworld fronts—Lefitowa, Burns, Mucho, et cetera—the fronts paying Arnold for the stock and Fats Manning making undercover cash payments to the fronts. Not a single share bought that way actually belongs to Manning, but every share of that stock is under Manning's control."

Trakker turned to his attorney.

"Well, Sam, what are we going to do about it?"

"I guess we'll fight," Sam said evenly.

Trakker took a check from his desk drawer and handed it to James.

"Here you are, sir. I don't know how you got this information, but it was a job well done. Mobsters trying to take over Trakker Trucking! I'll sell out to any legitimate buyer for a nickel on the dollar before I turn my stock over to criminals."

James folded the check and put it in his pocket.

"If you do get into a proxy fight," he said, "call me in, Mr.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Trakker, especially if those boys start playing rough. I'll do it as a labor of love. My technicians, of course, would have to be paid."

"If we need you, we'll certainly call you."

"I also suggest," James added, "that you contact the U.S. Attorney General's office. The government will give you a hand. They're taking a big interest in industrial crime these days."

"I talked to a man in Washington this morning," Sam said. "We're mailing him a copy of your report this afternoon."

"You boys work fast," James said approvingly. "If I'm not too presumptuous—what exactly do you have in mind?"

"Well—" Sam looked at Trakker, and Trakker nodded. "To begin with, Manning has only about 12 per cent of the common outstanding. That won't get him what he wants. At this stage publicity could ruin his game. So I'm sending him a registered letter—to Box 68, Riverview, Wisconsin, which should give him a jolt.

"I'm telling him we know who he is, what he's up to, how many shares he controls, how he is buying the stocks, and who's fronting for him. I'll leave it to his imagination to speculate on how much more we know that we really don't know. I'm also letting him know that all the information about him in our possession is being turned over to a college classmate of mine who is now employed by the Attorney General of the United States. And that if a proxy fight does develop, all rules to the contrary, we shall see to it that the more sensational aspects of this matter are given to the press. And copies of my letter are going to Jason Arnold, Victor Investments, and every 'front' stockholder whose name you have given us."

"And if that doesn't scare Manning off?" James asked.

"Like Sam told you," Trakker said, "we'll fight!"

Coming . . . another case of industrial crime and detection, this one involving skulduggery in a huge mutual fund. You say that you are a shareholder? Then don't miss James M. Ullman's "The Happy Days Club" —coming in the February 1963 issue, on sale January 2, 1963 . . .

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDITORS' FILE CARD

AUTHOR:	**EDWARD D. HOCH**
TITLE:	***Death in the Harbor***
TYPE:	Detective Story
DETECTIVE:	Captain Leopold
LOCALE:	United States
TIME:	The Present
COMMENTS:	*To Captain Leopold of Homicide, faced with a series of insane murders, it looked like a skindiver. The trouble was, there were 280 skindivers in the area . . .*

DR. OSCAR FLOWN WAS A YACHTSman. The joy of his life was a 47-foot twin Diesel cruiser with a fiberglass hull, built to his specifications in England. It could accommodate six people and a crew of two, and only a week-end of bad weather or an emergency case kept him from enjoying the warmth and splendor of the Sound by starlight. His boat, the *High Flown,* was usually anchored in the harbor within rowing distance of the yacht club; and if its 3′ 2″ draft kept it inconveniently far from shore at this point, it also discouraged some of the livelier drunks frequenting the club on Saturday nights from invading its decks.

It was an odd combination of circumstances that found Dr. Flown alone aboard his craft at eleven o'clock on this Saturday night. His wife and the two youths who served him week-ends as a makeshift crew had gone ashore—the boys for groceries and Mrs. Flown to meet the couples who were to join them on an overnight cruise. Dr. Flown had stayed behind, mainly to call the hospital about an operation he had performed in the morning.

He had just replaced the radio telephone in its cradle when he felt the cruiser lurch slightly. It might only have been the passing wake of another boat, but he knew that none had passed. Was someone climbing aboard?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Who's there?" the doctor called out, not really expecting an answer. He went up on deck to satisfy himself it was his imagination.

He saw the thing clearly in the moonlight and had just time enough to ask, "What do you want?" before he dropped to the deck wondering why he had to die.

The black waters rippled for a moment, then crystallized again.

Leopold had a headache. Sitting there shuffling the Monday morning reports around on his cluttered desk, he groaned at the injustice of it all. Two or three drinks the night before, and he was suffering like an alcoholic.

"Morning, Captain."

Leopold shoved the unread reports aside. "Good morning, Fletcher. What happened over the week-end?"

"Not much. Knifing down by the marsh. We got a boy locked up. And you probably saw in the papers that Doc Flown shot himself on his boat."

Leopold nodded. "I never figured Doc for that."

"Who did? Funny case, too."

"Funny?" Leopold reached for a cigarette, remembered that smoking always made his headache worse, and changed his mind.

"Funny. Flown radiophoned the city hospital to check on a patient just before he did it. Nurse says he even joked with her. And he didn't leave a note."

"Any chance it was murder?"

Fletcher shrugged. "He was alone on the boat. The shot attracted some people on shore and they rowed out and found him. They all swear they saw nobody leave the yacht."

"What about the gun?"

"Fell overboard, I guess. We didn't find it."

"Powder burns?"

"Inconclusive. Could be the gun was fired from several feet away."

Leopold sighed. "Spend a little time on it, Fletcher. Check out his wife for boy friends, disgruntled patients, that sort of thing. Just in case."

That was the way things still stood in the Flown case on the following Saturday evening, just after dusk, when in the same harbor a tramp fisherman named Thad Proctor had the back of his head blown off by a contact shot from a .38 revolver. Like Dr. Flown, Proctor had apparently been alone aboard his ancient, paint-peeling trawler when it happened.

The harbor was calm beneath a warmish Sunday morning sun. Overhead a few noisy gulls circled; the only other sound was the gentle slap of water against the dockside.

To Leopold, it did not seem a day for investigating murder, and the trawler tied to the dock did not seem a vehicle worthy of the crime. It was a smelly old tub full of fish pens. On deck, just behind the pilot

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

house, stood the trawl winch; farther back, the fish checker. It was a boat designed for the work of the sea, not of the police.

"Where was he found?" Leopold asked Fletcher.

"The companionway by the pilot house door. He was a mess."

"Alone on the boat, I understand."

Fletcher said, "Just like Dr. Flown, Captain. And the papers have already linked them up." He handed Leopold the first section of the Sunday *Chronicle*. An eight-column banner screamed, *SECOND VICTIM FOR HARBOR PHANTOM?*

"Have we got a report on the bullet yet?"

"I just called the lab. Same gun killed both of them."

"Then the paper's right," Leopold said. "Where's this man's brother?"

Fletcher nodded toward a shabby fisherman on the trawler's deck, and Leopold climbed aboard. "You're Bill Proctor?"

"Might call me that."

"Your brother Thad have any enemies?"

"Who doesn't?" The fisherman's jaws kept grinding away at a plug of tobacco.

"Tell me what happened."

"Boat was tied up right here. I'd been in town and was coming back when I heard the shot."

"See anyone?"

The man spattered a glob of tobacco juice on the deck. "Nobody. Thought I heard a splash to starboard, but I didn't see anything come to the surface."

Leopold frowned. "Anybody else hear this?"

"A lot of them heard the shot."

"How about you? Ever fight with Thad?"

The man looked surprised. "We were brothers. We fought."

"You don't seem too sorry he's dead."

"Should I be? Now the boat's all mine." Then, almost as an afterthought, "He was a good man, though."

Leopold returned to where Fletcher was waiting. "Only the brother? No other family?"

"None."

"This one certainly has nothing in common with the Flown case."

"Nothing but the bullet, Captain."

"That's right, nothing but the bullet. What about Flown's wife?"

Fletcher shrugged. "They had their troubles. Oh, and a patient of Doc's died last month—it blew up a storm."

Leopold lit a cigarette, watching a seagull head into the sun. "Tell me more."

"A ten-year-old boy was hit by a car a few months back and badly injured. Flown was the family doctor. The kid died a couple of weeks back. Doc Flown ruled he died of pneumonia, not as a result of the accident. The mother and father

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are furious. They blame Flown, not only for their son's death, but for keeping them from collecting the insurance they had on the kid."

"Accident policy?"

"Yeah. All they got was a settlement on the hospital bills."

"What are their names?"

"A Mr. and Mrs. Reever. Here's the address."

Leopold pocketed the paper. "You stay here and see what you can find out about this Proctor. And, Fletcher, when you get back to headquarters, run through the IBM cards and find me a cop who knows something about skindiving. I want him assigned to these cases."

"Skindiving?" Fletcher echoed.

"That's right," Captain Leopold said. "Have him in my office first thing tomorrow morning."

Mrs. Oscar Flown greeted Leopold in a Chinese-silk housecoat with a half-empty glass in one hand and a bottle in the other. Middle-aged, perhaps beautiful once, now a drunk.

She led him into a living room big enough for a bowling alley, and poured him a drink without asking if he wanted one.

"It's about your husband, Mrs. Flown."

"Isn't everything?" she said, making it a sort of sob. "I buried him Thursday and I haven't been sober since."

"It's not suicide any more, Mrs. Flown. The same gun killed another man last night. Dr. Flown was murdered."

Her shaky hand tried to set down the glass. It overturned, spilling its contents over the table top. "Even dead, Oscar's a troublemaker," she sobbed.

"You didn't get along with him?"

"I got along with his money. He *and* his crummy patients could have rotted in that hospital for all I cared. I'm not drinking because he's gone, damn him—I'm drinking because the money's gone."

Leopold got to his feet. "I'll be back when you're sober, Mrs. Flown."

"That'll be the day. Don't you want your drink?"

"Not right now, thanks."

He drove across town to a far different kind of house, a dull frame structure in a shabby neighborhood, and rang the Reevers' bell. If they were home, they chose not to answer. The dingy street was empty even of children, and Captain Leopold felt uncomfortably alone. Finally he gave up and drove away.

In the morning Leopold was at his desk before nine. He did not bother with the accumulation of routine week-end reports; instead he turned his attention to the lab sheets and other reports on the Flown-Proctor case. He had hardly begun when Fletcher stuck his head into the office.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Captain, I've got Patrolman Browning outside."

"Browning? Jack Browning? What for?"

"He's the only man in the department with skindiving experience."

"Browning?"

"Yes, Captain," Fletcher said, grinning.

"Well? Send him in!"

Leopold hastily reached for a cigarette. Of all the men in the department it had to be Jack Browning! Tall, handsome, a devil with the women. The best man on the Vice Squad until two years ago, when Leopold had had to bust him back to a beat cop for departmental violations. Browning thereafter had no love for Leopold, and the Captain avoided him whenever possible.

Leopold was shaking his head when Browning came in, handsome as ever.

"You wanted me, Captain?"

"I sent for a man with skindiving experience. It turns out you're elected. I hope you won't let personal feelings stand in the way of your doing a good job."

"Of course not," Browning said, sounding insincere. "What's the job?"

"The two killings in the harbor—Dr. Flown last week-end, and now this fisherman, Thad Proctor. Both killed with the same gun, both while they were apparently alone on their boats."

Browning pulled up a chair and sat down. "You think the killer was a skindiver?"

"It figures. With a Scuba tank and mask, the killer could have escaped unnoticed from Dr. Flown's yacht. And the fisherman's brother thinks he heard a splash after the shot."

"What's the motive?"

"He might be a nut of some sort. If so, there may be more killings. We've got to find him fast." Captain Leopold sat forward in his chair. "How would a skindiver transport a gun underwater?"

"Simple. A waterproof pouch of some sort. There are several on the market."

Leopold frowned. "The gun bugs me. Why use a gun at all? A knife would be a lot safer—no noise. Skindivers usually carry knives, don't they?"

Browning nodded. "But maybe the killer's a woman, or a man who doesn't like knives. It takes strength and a certain kind of guts to kill with a knife."

"And maniacs have both." But Leopold still looked unhappy. "How can we get a list of all the skindivers in this area?"

Browning thought for a moment. "Two ways, Captain. A local Scuba group puts out a sort of newsletter. Goes to about two hundred names. I can latch onto that list easy enough. The second possibility is the supply stores. Those air tanks have to be filled, and there are only three places in town that do it. Since

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

most customers of that sort have charge accounts or are known to the clerks, I should be able to get another list there and check the two lists against each other."

"Okay, Browning, go to it. Try to have a report for me by tomorrow morning."

For a time, after Browning went out, Leopold sat watching the comings and goings of the city below. Somewhere down there stalked a killer, a man or a woman who appeared, murdered, and vanished like a phantom. Had Dr. Flown and Thad Proctor been the random victims of a psycho, or had they been coldly chosen pawns in an overall plan whose design was still obscure?

He dialed the harbor patrol and spoke briefly to the officer on duty. "This is Captain Leopold of Homicide. I want a boat dockside on twenty-four-hour duty, ready to move out at five minutes' notice. That's right . . . I'll clear it with the Commissioner."

He hung up and thought some more. All right, suppose Flown was the real objective, and Proctor's murder was only a cover for it. Suppose . . . He suddenly remembered that he should talk to the Reevers.

The street was as silent as it had been on Sunday. But this time, after his second ring, a tired-looking woman with gray hair answered the door.

"Yes, that's my name. What are you selling?"

Leopold showed her his shield. "I've got a few questions to ask you, Mrs. Reever."

"If it's about the dog, we don't know a thing! He's been gone all week. Anyway, it wasn't him that bit that woman."

Leopold smiled. "It's not about the dog, Mrs. Reever. It's about Dr. Flown."

The woman stepped aside and he entered a room with dirty windows. The room looked as tired as she did. "I can't say I was sorry to hear about him dying. That man killed my Donald, and after that he does us out of the insurance money from the accident policy."

"Mrs. Reever, if you really believe Dr. Flown was responsible for your son's death, you can't also hold that the accident caused it. You can't have it both ways."

She waved a hand in listless despair. "I don't know. Talk to my husband."

"Did either of you ever threaten Dr. Flown's life?"

"I don't know what my husband said." Her eyes flashed into vicious life for a moment. "Him and his damn yacht—bought with blood money from poor people like us!"

"I'd like to talk to your husband, Mrs. Reever. Where can I find him?"

"At work! He puts in an honest eight hours every day. Down at the Harbor Fish Market."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As Leopold made his way through the fish markets, seeking Frank Reever, it occurred to him that a man working daily among these sights and sounds and smells might at times find his eye wandering across the stretch of open water to the yacht basin, might find himself increasingly resentful of the plush life there, just out of reach. A man like Frank Reever might even decide to do something about it.

Reever was big, built like a gorilla. His handshake was a closing vise, his breath a blowtorch of fishy decay. "Police?" the man growled. "What about?"

"About the murder of Dr. Flown. I understand you made certain threats against him."

Someone wheeled in a new barrel of fish, and the men around them got to work. Reever seemed glad of the break in the routine; he led Leopold to an out-of-the-way corner. "Sure, I threatened him. What he did to my kid, he deserved to die. I told him some day I'd come out to that fancy yacht of his and work him over good with a fish knife."

"Did you?"

"He was shot, wasn't he? If it was me, I'd 'a' used a knife."

"Where were you a week ago Saturday night?"

"Home with my wife. Or maybe down at the bar for a while."

"Which was it?"

"You think I killed him?"

"I'm just asking you where you were," Leopold said. "If that's too tough a question, Reever, I can give you plenty of time down at headquarters to think up a good answer."

"I was down at the bar till around eleven," the man said sullenly. "Then I went home."

"Flown was killed around eleven. Ever do any skindiving?"

"Me? You kidding?"

Someone in the crowd around the fish barrel yelled at Reever to get back to work. Leopold stood in the corner a few minutes, watching. Then he went over to the man. "Did you know Thad Proctor, *too?*"

Reever frowned. Finally he answered, "We get to know all the regular fishermen. Sure I knew him."

"Thanks. We'll be in touch with you."

Driving back downtown, Leopold felt he had accomplished something. Frank Reever was a link between the two murdered men—he had known the fisherman, Proctor, and he admitted having threatened Dr. Flown. It was something for the boys to work on . . .

But, by Tuesday morning, Leopold's fire had cooled. The Reever lead seemed remote and the calendar on his desk made the coming Saturday night loom large with another possible killing. Well, all right, if he didn't get a break by Saturday he could put a dozen police boats out on patrol. He might

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

even persuade the Safety Commissioner to ban all boats from the harbor. Or were two murders the end of it? . . .

Fletcher poked his head into the office. "The Commissioner was looking for you yesterday on those harbor killings, Captain."

"I was working on them."

"I told him that. But he doesn't think a captain of Homicide should have to pound the pavements himself. Said that's what you've got us for."

"Hell! Does he want this nut or doesn't he?" Leopold exploded. "I could use another ten men on this case! Oh, Browning, come in."

Browning had appeared in the doorway behind Fletcher, holding a stapled sheaf of typewritten sheets. "Here's the dope, Captain. Every skindiver within fifty miles."

"How many are there?" Leopold asked eagerly.

"I counted 252 on the mailing list of that newsletter, and we picked up an additional 28 names at the area stores—I mean, names that weren't on the newsletter list. I've combined them into one master list—280 names and addresses, arranged alphabetically. Of course, not all these people are active skindivers. Some just have a casual interest in it."

"Leave one copy with me, and you and Fletcher start working down the other one. Get help if you need it. Check every name, report anything suspicious. Oh, one other thing, Browning. Get me a list of expert swimmers in the area—the college swimming team, that sort of thing. Just in case we're on the wrong track with this skindiver angle."

Leopold went carefully through the skindiver list, studying each name in an attempt to jog some dormant memory: Adams, Aldrich, Anderson, Appelbaum, Babcock, Bailey, Bauer, Beckerman, Bentley, Bishop, Bond, Brown, Brozzi, Burns, Callario, Childs . . .

His eyes skipped to the P's, but there was no Proctor. Also no Reever, and no Mrs. Flown. Which proved nothing, really. But the thought of Mrs. Flown reminded him of unfinished business. He left the list on his desk and reached for his hat.

This time Mrs. Flown was sober. But she was in no better spirits. He found her working in the garden behind the house, and she was on the defensive from the beginning. "You trying to pin Oscar's murder on me?"

Leopold said, "Only if you're guilty, Mrs. Flown."

"I was with a dozen people when he was shot."

"Then you have nothing to worry about. Did you know this other man who was killed—Thad Proctor?"

"The fisherman?" She made it a dirty word. "Of course not."

"Your husband ever have any dealings with him?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"He never mentioned a Thad Proctor to me."

"Can you give me a list of your husband's patients, Mrs. Flown?"

"Some. The hospital would have the rest."

She took Captain Leopold into the house and he went through the names. He could not recall seeing any of them on the skindiver list. So he thanked her and drove downtown to the hospital, where he obtained a list of all the patients Flown had treated there during the past year. Again, there was nothing familier about any of the names.

Leopold went to bed early that night. He was awakened at eleven thirty by his bedside telephone. "Hello?" he mumbled.

"Captain, this is Browning. I'm at the harbor. There's been another one."

"Another one?" His mind snapped into focus.

"Another killing."

Leopold cursed. "Meet me at the police boat. I'll be there in fifteen minutes!"

Leopold stood beside Browning in the sea-swept bow of the police boat as it churned through the harbor, its high-powered searchlight sweeping the water in random arcs. They followed a zigzag route leading nowhere, and before they had completed their second pass the police captain was convinced it was useless.

"It's been a good forty-five minutes," he said. "Time enough to swim to any of those boats or to shore. We're wasting our time." He ordered the police boat to head in toward the battery of lights that marked the scene of the latest crime.

It was a converted whaleboat fitted with sails and an eight-horsepower motor, an odd sort of craft even for this portion of the Sound. Leopold guessed it had come from up north, somewhere along the New England coastline.

There was a young man in swimming trunks aboard, crying like a baby over the body of a pretty girl. She had been shot. The bikini she was wearing accented the youthful curves of her body. Leopold dropped the canvas with a sigh.

"I'm Captain Leopold, Homicide. Suppose you tell me what happened."

The young man looked up, his eyes still blurred with tears. "She's dead. She's dead."

"Did you see the killer?"

"Yes. We were going for a late swim. Jean had already changed to her suit, and I was below getting into mine. I felt the boat sway a bit, heard Jean scream. There . . . there was a shot. I ran up on deck and saw a figure in shiny black bending over her. It was horrible—he seemed to be looking at the wound his bullet had just made. Even though he saw me, he stayed long enough to fire one more shot into her. Then he went over the side. I went in after him, but I lost

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

him in the dark. So I came back on board, and . . ."

Leopold turned to one of the uniformed men. "You got their names?" he asked softly.

"He's Martin Irving, and the girl's name is Jean Young. Down from the Cape, pulled in tonight. Hadn't heard about the murders, Irving says."

"Engaged?"

The patrolman shook his head. "Week's vacation together. Just shacking up."

"All right. If the Doc finds she was pregnant, let me know right away."

Browning edged forward. "You think the guy killed her, Captain?"

"Maybe. Two bullets in this one. Change of pattern. He could have heard about our murders and decided to tie in."

They stood around while photographers snapped flash photos and the doctor made a preliminary examination. As the body was being carried ashore, Leopold asked the medic what he thought. "Funny thing," the doctor answered. "Looks to me like the first shot killed her. Why he would stop for a second shot this time beats me."

"Let me have your report first thing in the morning."

Leopold went home, but he did not sleep. He spent the rest of the night pacing the floor, seeing the mysterious figure in its glistening black skindiver's suit.

On Wednesday morning the papers had a ball: *HARBOR PHANTOM KILLS AGAIN! THIRD MURDER IN 11 DAYS!* Leopold read it all, even the editorial he could have written himself. "Citizens demand action." Sure they did!

Fletcher slipped some typed sheets onto Leopold's desk.

The Captain skimmed through the lab reports. Not pregnant. First shot passed through the body, killing her instantly. Slug not recovered, probably skidded overside. Second shot in the chest as she lay on the deck. Bullet identical with the ones that had killed Flown and Proctor.

He picked up the report on Martin Irving. Apparently the young man had been a hundred miles away at the time of the first and second murders, each of which had been committed on a Saturday night.

Leopold flicked a button on his desk. "Browning?"

"Yes, Captain."

"Find out if this fellow Irving does any skindiving back home. And assemble everyone for a meeting right after lunch. We've got to move fast if we're going to get the newspapers off our backs."

But the noon editions moved faster. The morning's *HARBOR PHANTOM KILLS AGAIN!* had been replaced by *POLICE HELPLESS AGAINST MADMAN.* And when Leopold returned from lunch, the hallway outside his office was crowded with reporters. He

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

slipped through another door before they noticed him, and buzzed Fletcher, Browning, and the others.

When they were all in the tiny office, Leopold lolled back in his chair in his deceptively sleepy manner. "Killings—three in eleven days. All by the same man, with the same gun, and you wouldn't bet he's through yet. Our skindiving killer may be nuts—but even nuttiness can make sense of a sort.

"The killer may be after just one of the victims. It's the old A, B, C theory, in which only A or B or C is the real victim, the others serving merely to confuse the issue. Bearing this out is the fact that we've found nothing linking the three victims together. A second possibility is that he hates people with boats. Any people, any boats."

"That *would* make him a nut," Fletcher agreed.

"But not too much of a nut," Leopold said dryly. "If this Martin Irving is telling the truth, the skindiver paused over his third victim long enough to fire a second bullet into her, though it must have been obvious to him she was dead. Why risk capture or identification in order to fire an apparently unnecessary bullet? *Because the first bullet had passed clean through her and was lost.* Looks to me as if the skindiver took the time and risk to fire that second shot just so we'd have a bullet to compare with the ones from the other two victims' bodies. This man may be mad, but he's intent on making us believe the killings are connected.

"That would also explain the use of a pistol rather than a knife. It's next to impossible to prove three people were stabbed with the same knife, but with the same gun there's proof positive. It's important enough for our killer to bother with a waterproof holster, which must certainly slow down his movements."

"You're sure it's a skindiver?" Browning asked.

"The evidence all points to it, and this fellow Irving claims he actually saw him. I think we can reasonably assume it's someone on this master list. We've got to redouble our efforts to check out every name. I want some action by tomorrow!"

And he got it, surprisingly enough. At ten the next morning, which was Thursday, Fletcher caught him returning from the usual pep talk in the Commissioner's office. "I got someone for you, Captain."

"Who?"

"Appelbaum, one of the skindivers. He's been talking up a skindivers' club in the harbor. Sort of a nut on the subject—wanted all boating banned on week-ends. I've got him outside."

"Get him in here!"

Appelbaum was a youngish, intense man with an athlete's body and a fanatical look in his eyes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Am I to be charged?" he asked in a rasping voice. "If so, I demand a lawyer."

"Calm down," Leopold told him. "Tell me about your scheme for the harbor, Mr. Appelbaum."

"Is this about those three murders?"

"Yes."

"I just wanted to clear out the boats on Saturdays and Sundays, so our skindivers' club could explore the harbor area."

"Did you ever go diving out there? At night?"

"It would be damned dangerous. Nobody but a nut would dive around those power boats."

"Some nut did. Where were you Tuesday night?"

"Out with my girl."

"And last Saturday?"

"At a movie—alone."

"A week ago Saturday?"

"At a poker game."

"You have a fast memory." Then, to Fletcher, "Check him out and let me know what you find."

Leopold went back to his office to brood over the piles of reports. Then he got out a Department of Commerce chart of the harbor and studied it for a long time. It told him nothing.

Toward evening Fletcher came back, looking discouraged.

"I checked Appelbaum out. The poker game alibi is cast-iron, although the other two have holes in them. If the same guy did all three jobs, he's in the clear."

Leopold stared out the window at the lowering sun. "Could it be that's why the same gun was used? —to make it look like one killer when it was actually several? Three men, passing the gun on from one to another, enabling one of them to always have an unbreakable alibi?"

"*Three* nuts?" Fletcher asked. "Three nuts who are expert skindivers—and killers, too?"

"You're right," Leopold sighed. "Mass murder like this is a one-man crime."

Fletcher nodded and went out, closing the office door behind him. For some time Leopold stared out the window again, watching the lights of the city as they turned on for still another night. He felt sick.

Finally he pulled out the long list and went over it once more, from Adams to Zwigg. But it always came out the same . . .

Browning came in with a harbor map. "Can I bother you a second, Captain? I think I've got an idea on the phantom."

Leopold's eyes lit up. "Let's hear it."

Browning spread the chart out on Leopold's desk. "The killer had to come from somewhere—right? I don't think he came off another boat; that would be too risky. We might search them and find his gun and suit, or someone might see him climbing on board, or notice the same boat in the area on all three occasions. No, I think he swam from land."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I'll buy that," Leopold agreed. "Keep talking."

"Well, the harbor is open to the Sound on the southeast, which leaves land on the other three sides. Did he come from the southwest? I don't think so—it's true a finger of marshland stretches out into the water there, but it disappears at high tide, and the last two murders were committed around high tide."

"Get to the point."

"The diver must be operating from one hidden spot where he can get into his gear unnoticed. Look at this chart again: the entire northwest quadrant is taken up with bathing beaches and the casino grounds. He certainly wouldn't take a chance on entering or leaving the water there, with midnight lovers and beach parties in full swing. Due north of the harbor are the docks, another busy area night and day. It narrows down to the northeast quadrant—where there are a number of cottages, but also one or two fairly deserted stretches. He wouldn't be a cottage owner—crazy killers don't strike that close to home. So that leaves one of these stretches of bluff right along *here*." His finger jabbed at the map. "I know this area, Captain—it's quite rocky, with not enough land below the bluff for a beach. It would be perfect for our man. It's my hunch he has his gear and the gun hidden there."

Leopold felt a rising excitement. "It's worth a try. Good work."

"Want me to run you out there tonight, Captain?"

"Get your car—I'll be down in five minutes!"

The bluffs overlooking the harbor were pale in the moonlight, a little sinister. Below, in the silvery waters, Leopold could see that the killings had taken their toll of the pleasure craft. The usually crowded area now held only three boats, and one of these was the police launch, on patrol duty.

Leopold followed the younger man down over the slippery rocks. Browning was right—this would be the perfect base for the killer's operations. Lonely, remote, yet only a five-minute swim to the harbor anchorage area.

"Down this way, Captain," Browning whispered, hopping noiselessly to the next half-buried rock, "Keep it quiet, Captain. This might be another of his nights."

"I don't think he'd try anything with that police boat out there," Leopold whispered back.

"You never know with a nut."

They crept along the rocks, watching for evidence of recent human presence. Around them now was only the sound of the water, ever in motion, ever changing.

"What's that?" Browning gripped Leopold's arm. "There!"

It was a bundle wrapped in rubber sheeting, hidden in a crevice between two boulders. Browning went in for it, lifting it carefully out

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for Leopold's examination. Leopold removed the sheeting. A black-painted air tank . . . a black rubber suit . . . flippers . . . a mask . . . Leopold had a fleeting sense of exhilaration.

"All here. You were right, Browning." He unzipped the waterproof pouch, not surprised to find it empty. "At least, it's all here but the gun."

"The gun's here, Captain."

Leopold looked up. Browning was raising the glistening .38, slowly, as if he had all eternity to train it on the captain's middle.

"The gun's here, Leopold. And this time it's for you."

Leopold stood very still on the rock, his death a mere tightened finger away. He stood very still and he said distinctly, "You killed those three people, Browning?"

Browning's eyes were as wild as they had been in Leopold's office a few days before. "Damned right I killed them. You had that A, B, C business all figured out, Leopold—all but the payoff. I killed Doc Flown and Proctor and that girl just to cover up my real pigeon—*you*. In a minute you'll be dead and I'll have a perfect story. We surprised the phantom and he shot you. The bullet will match and no one's going to doubt it. You'll just be D after A, B, C. And they'll probably give you a medal with your funeral, Leopold, which is more than you gave me!"

"You deserved what you got, Browning." I must keep him talking, Leopold thought.

"I've spent two years of my life planning how I'd get even with you for busting me back to a beat. That's why the first three killings had to be on boats. I knew when you tumbled to the skindiving, you'd request an officer with skindiving experience to work with you on the case. And I was the only man in the department who could qualify. It takes a good detective to think up a perfect crime, Captain!"

"What if I hadn't thought of the skindiving right away?"

"Then I'd have gone on killing till you did. I'm hiding you in a forest of bodies, Leopold, and I'm even going to cover you up with one or two more. What's one or two more murders to a nut?" Browning laughed. "Of course, I've got to leave this diving gear for the boys, to back up my story. But it's not traceable, and I've another outfit stashed away. The gun stays on me. Who'll think of searching *me?*"

"Browning . . . wait . . ."

"I've waited too long already." The .38 in Browning's big hand steadied.

"Put down the gun," Leopold flipped open his jacket. A box was strapped to his chest.

"What's that?" Browning asked, childishly.

"A short-range radio transmitter. Fletcher and the others heard every word you said."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A blinding spotlight shot down from above; another cut in from the harbor patrol boat offshore. The lights pinned Browning to the rocks.

"You knew! Damn you, you knew . . ."

As Leopold flung himself aside the gun roared once and he felt the slug tearing through the flesh of his shoulder and then a dozen other weapons answered and Browning toppled, clawing at the air, into the shallow water.

Someone was bandaging Leopold's shoulder. Someone else was taking a picture. Fletcher stood watchfully by, his right fist still holding his revolver.

"How did you know, Captain? How did you know in time to call us?"

"I didn't. I didn't know half of it, Fletcher, or at least I wouldn't admit to myself that I knew. There was just that one little slip—the fact that he *didn't include his own name* in the list of skindivers he made up for me. I noticed that after a while—no Browning on what was supposed to be a *complete* list of names. I kept asking myself *why* —why he'd left it out. I didn't like the answer, but I couldn't afford to take chances. That's why I wore the radio and had you follow me tonight."

"Have a cigarette?"

"Thanks."

Offshore, the police boat coughed and started back across the harbor.

"Don't blame yourself for anything, Captain. Like you said, he was nuts."

Leopold stared out over the black water at his harbor. "I hope so, Fletcher. I hope so."

ELLERY QUEEN'S 1963 ANTHOLOGY / 505 PARK AVE. / NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

Please send me _____ copies of ELLERY QUEEN'S 1963 ANTHOLOGY. I am enclosing $1.00 for each copy ($1.25 in Canada).

Name_____
(Please print)

Address_____

City_____ **Zone**_____ **State**_____

E1162

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

An unusual story about an unusual crime . . .

A FAIR BET

by JIM KJELGAARD

NIGHT CAME SOFTLY, LIKE THE slow, careful draping of a rich velvet mantle, and when it did, Jose Herrera put another block of wood on his fire. Within the circle of light his 26 goats bunched together and rested comfortably.

A night bird shrieked, a branch cracked, and out in the jungle a *tigre* coughed. But the goats did not stir and Jose did not worry. Goats were no fools. They knew perfectly well that neither the *tigre* nor any other harmful thing would come near the fire, and they were safe as long as they did not stray from it. Jose crooned gently to his flock a repetitive, mournful little song.

"Quiet, my little ones. Quiet, my dears. The *tigre* coughs but he will not harm you. Quiet, my little ones. Be quiet and rest, for tomorrow you must walk into the hills. Quiet, my little ones—"

He continued to sing, improvising a tune as he did so and pleasing himself by fitting lyrics to it. Jose swayed contentedly to the sound of his own singing, for it was a good thing, a glorious thing, to have 26 goats. A man so rich need never go hungry nor need he engage in the back-breaking labor of the fields.

Abruptly Jose stopped singing. The goats had been quiet, but they had become even quieter. Jose's hand stole beneath his *serape* to the ancient .45 he kept there. Someone, or something, was coming.

A moment later Pedro Anaya rode into the firelight.

Though he came alone, Pedro seemed to be accompanied by a roll of drums, and preceded by a smartly dressed footman who snapped to immediate and rigid attention—for that was the way Pedro Anaya did everything. For a moment he sat on his horse, big hat rakishly askew, fire reflecting from his flashing white teeth. Then, as soon as he was certain that Jose had taken fullest advantage of the smart picture he presented, he dismounted and rushed forward with both arms extended.

"Jose! My dearest friend! I was told that you passed our way this afternoon and my misery was vast because I did not see you! I rode all this way just so we might exchange greetings!"

"Welcome to my fire," Jose said cautiously.

© 1951 by American Legion; originally titled, "Pedro the Gambler."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He remained wary, alert, for Pedro Anaya had never in his life ridden three kilometers, or even one, merely to greet an old friend. He sought old friends, and strangers, solely because he thought they might have pesos. Valiantly he devoted all his waking time, and some of his sleeping time, to thinking up new ways to get other people's money.

With a flourish he sat down beside the fire.

"Ah!" he said, managing to be dramatic even as he warmed his hands, "you goatherds have the life! Never are you encumbered by dirty houses, or hags of wives, or squalling brats, because you can always walk off and leave them! You spend your lives among God's finest creations! Is it not grand, Jose?"

"Sometimes," Jose said.

Pedro Anaya took a coin from his pocket and began tossing it. Jose watched narrowly, knowing what to expect now, and it was not long in coming.

"My dear old friend," Pedro Anaya said, "let me gladden your heart by sending you on your way with a few additional pesos. You choose the side you wish, and I will toss the coin. To make it interesting, we will lay a small wager."

Jose struggled with inner temptation. Reason told him to refuse, for Pedro Anaya knew every trick in the book and had invented a few of his own. But desire lured Jose on.

Jose took five soiled peso notes, the only money he had in the world, out of his pocket and separated two of them.

"I will bet these two pesos," he said, "on tails."

"Magnificent!" Pedro beamed. "It is a wager!"

He tossed the coin. It glittered in the firelight and came down heads up. Pedro snatched at the coin, but Jose was just a bit quicker. He looked at the pocket piece. There was heads on one side and heads on the other.

Jose's hand flicked toward the .45, but he thought better of it. There was a very good reason for not resorting to violence.

Pedro Anaya already had a snub-nosed automatic in his hand, and it was pointing, rather carelessly, at Jose.

With the first flush of dawn, his goats clustered about him, Jose was on his way. He traveled slowly, letting the goats graze as they would, for there was no hurry about reaching the Santa Rosas. If he did not get there tonight he would tomorrow, or the day after that. At any rate he would get there, and his beloved flock would grow fat and lazy on the good grazing.

A tapir rumbled out of his way, a flock of green parrots swore at him, and a green monkey set his goats to trotting by throwing sticks down on them.

Jose walked quietly, unperturbed

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by such trifles, and so much at peace with himself that he had all but forgotten how Pedro Anaya cheated him out of two pesos. He had three left, and where would a man spend even that much within the Santa Rosas?

Then, ahead, he saw the roily Montemaris River.

In the rainy season it was a wide river, filled with treacherous currents and unexpected snags, but now it was scarcely more than a creek, a series of pools connected by meandering riffles. Only it was necessary to be careful of the pools because many of them had a quicksand bottom, and the pool crossed by this trail was one of the very few that offered solid footing.

Jose walked unconcernedly down to the pool, for one more river was merely one more river. He and his goats would wade as far as they could into it, swim until they could wade again, and climb out the other side.

Jose came to the pool and prepared to enter. Then he leaped back suddenly, shouting a warning to his goats as he did so. Almost with the same motion he jerked his .45 from its holster and fired into the river.

For a moment he stood trembling, aghast at the thing he had seen. As big as a log, it was not a log. It was a terrible, scaly monster, a hellish dragon whose ferocious jaw was lined with hundreds of teeth, and it had been lying at the crossing waiting for prey.

When he could no longer see the crocodile, Jose sheated his gun and wiped the perspiration from his face. For five seasons he had crossed the Montemaris at this point, and for five seasons he had not seen a crocodile in this pool. Assuredly there was one now, and it was a big one. Jose turned to comfort his frightened goats.

"It is all right, my little ones," he said as they pressed anxiously about him. "It is all right, my dears. All of you are safe, and for that I praise God."

Jose sat down at a safe distance from the river bank. His goats, sensing the fact that they had been threatened by some terrible, sinister thing, remained very close to him. Jose curled an arm about the neck of his favorite nanny.

"What are we going to do?" he asked.

The goat bleated uneasily, and Jose could come up with nothing better. He must get to the Santa Rosas, and to get there he must cross this pool. He could not possibly risk such a crossing until he knew more.

Had his shot killed the crocodile? Or was the monster still in the pool, waiting to drag down the first thing rash enough to attempt a crossing? Certainly it was hungry, or else it never would have been lying in wait for food.

Jose got up to pace about and ponder the dilemma that faced him. He might throw one of his

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

goats into the pool, and see if the crocodile came up to get it. If it did, if it had food, the monster would surely be occupied for the time being and might not oppose a further crossing. If it did not, Jose would have proof that it was dead.

But which goat, which pet, should he expose to a fate so horrible? Jose had reared every one of his flock from kids. He knew their little whims, their manners, their likes and dislikes. He loved each member of his flock, and would as soon have thrown one of his children into the pool.

Then all the goats turned to face the direction from which they had come, and Pedro Anaya rode down the trail.

A frown creased Jose brow. It was all right for Pedro to have his fun, but when a man faced a terrible dilemma, a real emergency, he did not wish to have it further complicated by a wandering trickster.

"Ah, my friend!" Pedro bubbled. "Knowing that I had cheated you, I could not sleep last night! Such torments I endured! This morning I told myself that I must ride after Jose and let him win his two pesos back!"

Jose said nothing. He knew perfectly well that Pedro had ridden after him only because there might be more pesos to win. Pedro took a deck of cards from his pocket and shuffled them with one hand.

"Here I have cards," he said. "A good deck of cards. Now if you care to choose one and I care to choose one—"

"No," Jose said.

"Be not angry, my friend. I came only because I wish to make restitution, and I am agreeable to any suggestions. If you do not like cards, perhaps the dice—"

"No!"

Pedro let his charm go full blast. "Jose, you shrivel my heart! You drive me insane! I wish only to give your money back!"

"Then let us have a fair bet," Jose said, "with none of your trickery. I will bet you three pesos that I can swim across this pool and back before you can."

Jose started to remove his clothing, but with a happy shout Pedro Anaya raced down to the pool and plunged in. With long powerful strokes he swam to the other side and turned to come back. Dripping, he walked up beside Jose.

"I have won!" he chortled. "I have won before you were even ready!"

"Yes," Jose smiled as he paid. "You have won."

"You are not angry?" Pedro Anaya seemed puzzled.

"Why should I be?" Jose called his goats down to the pool and started them across. "Where can I spend money in the Santa Rosas?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDITORS' FILE CARD

AUTHOR: **JACOB HAY**

TITLE: ***The Reformation of Fogarty***

TYPE: Crime and Detection

LOCALES: Europe and the United States

TIME: The Present

COMMENTS: *Alexandre Dumas Fogarty conceived and executed the most stupendous fraud ever to hit the American art world; and when the chips were down, Fogarty was not the (con)man to be beaten at his own game . . .*

IF THE AMERICAN ART WORLD HAD known that Alexandre Dumas Fogarty was bored during that April of 1956, and if it had had the slightest inkling of what the awesome consequences of this ennui would be, the American art world would have trembled in its boots.

A vast man, Alexandre Dumas Fogarty, but tall enough to carry his avoirdupois with grace and agility—which was frequently necessary in the cramped confines of the flying bridge of the *Brave Musketeer* (ex-Royal Navy Motor Gunboat No. 745) which, in turn, was the principal asset of the Trans-Mediterranean Custom Freight Express Service, with headquarters in the then international city of Tangier.

This enterprise had discontinued operations when its owner, A. D. Fogarty, had observed the increasingly effective cooperation between the French and Italian customs services, and noted that both of those splendid organizations were equipping themselves with newer and more powerful launches against whose engines the elderly Rolls-Royces of the *Brave Musketeer* were proving less and less capable of competition. Then, too, by 1956, the European market for American nylons, cigarettes, and bonded bourbon was being adequately supplied through more normal channels of import.

So Fogarty had retired to Rome to enjoy the beauties of that fabled city and to give thought to his fu-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ture. The mere thought of returning to his family's dental supply business in Perth Amboy, N. J., caused him to shudder; for while there is much to be said for the false tooth industry, it cannot be denied that it lacks much of romance and excitement, two qualities without which Fogarty found life unendurable.

But for a robust, vital man, accustomed to a life of instant decisions and strenuous activity, even the splendors of Rome, bathed in that city's magical light, can begin to pall. Thus it was with Alexandre Dumas Fogarty, as he sat at his table that April afternoon on the sidewalk before Danielo's on the Via Veneto, his ruddy face a study in boredom beneath the blue beret which concealed his crew-cut red hair. His glass of Lacrimae Christi stood untouched on the table's marble surface; his cigarette smoldered unnoted in the ashtray which extolled the merits of a renowned stomach bitters.

Then, suddenly, a curious light shone in his steel-gray eyes and a slow smile spread across the rugged expanses of his cheeks. The hour was precisely 10:30 A.M., Rome Time.

Thousands of miles to the west, in the curator's office of the Wilma L. Blastfogle Memorial Art Museum, brightest jewel in the cultural crown of that admirable third-class city, Dexter, Pa., Miss Clarissa Saunders shivered involuntarily.

"Anything wrong, Miss Saunders?" asked her assistant, Miss Eustacia Wilkes, her tone concerned for her superior.

"Nothing, really," Miss Saunders replied quickly, with a light laugh. "Somebody walking over my grave, as my grandmother used to put it."

"Oh," said Miss Wilkes, enlightened. She glanced at the wall clock. "Four thirty—almost time to be thinking about closing up." And the incident was forgotten.

Alexandre Dumas Fogarty had remembered the di Venati brothers of Naples. More important, his future lay clear before him, sparkling with promise. And with gold.

Shortly before the Trans-Mediterranean Custom Freight Express Service ceased to exist, Fogarty had attended to a problem on behalf of an eminent, albeit unscrupulous, Italian capitalist who desired to transfer a not inconsiderable amount of gold to his bank in Tangier without submitting to the bothersome formalities normally required by the Italian government in transactions of this nature. A Neapolitan acquaintance had, sometime previously, introduced Fogarty to the brothers, Giovanni and Ernesto, who were manufacturers, in a small way, of religious statues and other objects of piety. Fogarty recalled their conversation.

"It is true that sales have slowed," Giovanni had conceded after he had listened to Fogarty's proposition over a bottle of Orvieto in the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

brothers' favorite café. "What with the communists and their anti-clerical views, people just aren't buying the way they used to in the old days. We can no longer afford to be as selective about what commissions we undertake."

"What he is trying to say, Signore," Ernesto had put in, a trifle impatiently, "is that we'll take the job."

In consequence of these negotiations the gold was transformed into several dozen small Saint Christophers, and these, painted in glowing colors, were passed through the Italian customs with the ease customarily associated with the theft of candy from a baby.

When they were not engaged in the creation and casting of their religious artifacts, the di Venatis devoted themselves to the cleaning and restoration of older works of church art, and the excellent state of preservation of the medieval and Renaissance statuary and painting so notable in many of the Neapolitan churches may be attributed in large measure to their loving craftsmanship and devotion.

Fogarty took the afternoon express to Naples.

"But what you suggest would be, in effect, forgery, Signore," Ernesto di Venati protested over another bottle of Orvieto.

"Not forgery, my dear Ernesto, but *reproduction*—simple, honest *reproduction*," Fogarty explained patiently as he signaled the waiter to bring a replacement for the first bottle. His eyes beamed with sheer integrity. "Why, my dear chap, the market for *reproductions* of fine art in the United States surpasses the imagination. Even the humblest housewife longs for the day when she can hang a Rembrandt over her television set, and no merchant of any substance would be caught dead without one or two bits of Greek statuary about his residence."

"Incredible," muttered Ernesto. "And one has always dismissed the Americans as gross materialists."

"We would have to take on another painter," Giovanni mused. "There is that young Pasquale Torsini, who lives just around the corner and is courting my Gina."

"A brilliant boy," Ernesto agreed with enthusiasm. "And he will not demand the moon as salary."

"You understand," Fogarty cautioned the brothers, "that I can undertake to market these reproductions only on condition that they represent the pinnacle of your artistic powers, only if they are absolutely indistinguishable from the originals in style, materials, and rendering. The American housewife, gentlemen, is a keen and observant customer, and nothing but the best will part her from her housekeeping dollar."

"But of a certainty," Ernesto and Giovanni replied as one man. "If it comes from the workshops of the di Venati," Ernesto added, "it will come only when it is perfection, or

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not at all. Thus it has been in our family for the past three centuries, and thus it will remain. You have our word on it, Signor Fogarty. And now it is our turn to buy . . . if you have never sampled the Apulian Sansevero, you have never truly tasted our finest white wines."

In this fashion, with nothing more than a manly handclasp to bind their bargain and the ancient honor of the di Venatis and the Fogartys to uphold it, was established a partnership which was to create history of a sort—and chaos—in the American art world.

While the brothers set about their end of the business, Fogarty occupied himself with the more delicate matter of securing the services of one Antonio Fragelli, of whose special skill, developed during years in the Italian underground, he now had need. Fragelli had long since graduated from such comparatively simple challenges as German identity papers and frontier passes. Additionally, he had enlarged his eerie talents by massive doses of scholarly research.

Given half a day, Fragelli could compose a screed attesting the authenticity of a medieval reliquary, written in the somewhat debauched Latin of the period and signed by a bishop, the whole on ancient parchment, and backed in depth by a latter-day typewritten statement on the engraved letterhead of the Italian Government bureau charged with the preservation of national art treasures. His rendering of the signature of the late and renowned art critic, Bernard Berenson, it was generally agreed, partook of the nature of a masterpiece.

Fragelli's eyes gleamed when Fogarty outlined his needs.

"Magnificent," he cried, overcome by emotion at the conclusion of Fogarty's remarks. "For years I have awaited a project with the scope to match my art. I am in your debt, Signor Fogarty, and you may cease to worry about the problem of documentation."

Fragelli was also commissioned to prepare a British passport and necessary supporting papers for a Dr. Andrew Duff Frazer, formerly Associate Consultant to the British War Office in the matter of restoring works of art to the various galleries and museums from which they had been looted by the Nazis during World War II. This was, Fogarty felt, an identity at once respectable and vague enough to defy all but the most persistent tracing. Too, the name would offer protection against the accidental display of one of his monogrammed handkerchiefs.

Of his association with Fragelli, Fogarty said nothing to the di Venatis. The honest brothers might not have understood. In the meantime, Fogarty devoted himself to a deep study of scholarly works on the history of art, and spent what little leisure he permitted himself in listening to the overseas broadcasts

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the British Broadcasting Corporation in order to perfect Dr. Andrew Duff Frazer's Oxonian accent.

In shortly less than six months the di Venatis and young Pasquale Torsini produced enough art treasures to stock a small gallery, each one—although they were unaware of this interesting fact—supplied with a completely fraudulent history fully and carefully documented by the masterful forgeries of Signor Fragelli. Among other items there were a hitherto unknown Tiepolo, found after centuries of neglect in the attic of a Venetian palace; several Canalettos, discovered among the effects of an Italian nobleman who had died in poverty, unaware of the wealth on his walls; and representative works of the Dutch and Flemish schools. In addition, there were half a dozen Etruscan bronzes and an equal number of exquisite late Greek marbles. These last the imaginative Ernesto —without prompting from Fogarty —had carefully shattered and then reconstructed, artfully leaving several chips out here and there.

"It gives them a nice antique finish," he had explained to a charmed and secretly delighted Fogarty.

"I think I'm ready for Rembrandt," young Pasquale Torsini declared the day Fogarty set sail for America with his counterfeit trove.

"Don't rush yourself, lad," Fogarty told him kindly. "But if you feel you're up to it, by all means!" He turned to the Brothers di Venati. "If this first shipment sells well, gentlemen, I feel we can turn next to some Cretan potteries, a few pieces of Egyptian funerary sculpture, and perhaps a few Byzantine icons."

"Possibly a small Michaelangelo, say, and a Cellini saltcellar?" Giovanni asked wistfully. "Nothing too elaborate, mind you."

"I leave it to your judgment with full confidence," Fogarty declared stoutly, taking their hands for a farewell clasp.

"A small going-away present," murmured Fragelli, who had come down to the pier for the sailing. Fogarty had introduced him simply as an old acquaintance, not wishing to disturb the high moral sense of the di Venatis and young Torsini. Now the master forger pressed a large envelope into Fogarty's hand.

"It is a letter of introduction for you from the Duke of Edinburgh," he said shyly. Fogarty was much moved by this kindness, since Fragelli had already written, at his regular rates, similar letters from the director of the Tate Gallery and the Curator of Fine Arts at the Louvre, both of whom had nothing but the highest regard for the professional integrity of Dr. Andrew Duff Frazer.

Thus armed, Alexandre Dumas Fogarty descended on the United States.

With that wisdom bred from his

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

experience in developing the Trans-Mediterranean Custom Freight Express Service, Fogarty elected not to test his skill in the big leagues until he had had an opportunity to polish it in the minors. In consequence, he concentrated his efforts on the newer and smaller museums and galleries which the American national prosperity has seen fostered in almost every city with any pretensions to civic pride. He warmed up, as it were, on the municipal museums and privately endowed galleries of such far-flung centers of culture as Evansville, Indiana, and Charlotte, North Carolina, and Akron, Ohio. Only after his merchandise and documents had successfully withstood the scrutiny of the officials of these lesser institutions did he move into the more hazardous dealings involved with the older and larger establishments.

Discretion forbids, even now, the public humiliation which would result from a revelation of the full list of Fogarty's major victims. Suffice it to say that the unknown Tiepolo hangs to this day in one of the largest museums in the east. Admittedly, the plaque identifying it bears a question mark after the artist's name, but even so, its presence says much for the skill and versatility of Pasquale Torsini.

Unloading the bogus horde took roughly six months, at the end of which period some 20 museums had paid Fogarty approximately $250,000 for his wares. It was, he decided, time to withdraw from the field—while he was ahead. There was always the possibility that he might encounter some museum director with the elementary common sense to write to the British War Office concerning the antecedents of Dr. Andrew Duff Frazer. Then, too, the letter from the Duke of Edinburgh—as gracious a note as a man might wish to receive from royalty—was becoming a trifle frayed at the folds.

In line with this decision he wrote to the di Venati brothers, explaining to them that, successful as sales had been, he was reluctantly obliged to retire from business on the advice of his physician—an old war wound was giving him a bit of trouble. With the letter he enclosed a check for $25,000 as their share of the receipts and by way of recompense for further work they may have put into preparation.

The brothers di Venati wrote back most gratefully, expressing regret and the hope that his health would soon enable him to resume their mutually profitable relationship.

All in all, Fogarty felt, it had been an entirely amicable and satisfactory transaction—although he later reproached himself bitterly for not sending for the Cellini saltcellar.

Thereafter Dr. Andrew Duff Frazer vanished from the face of the earth, and for the next several years Fogarty lived the life of a gen-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tleman of leisure in the small but exquisitely appointed villa he had purchased in Villefranche on the French Riviera. He dabbled in water colors and girl-watching, and resisted several determined assaults on his bachelorhood.

Now it might be thought that Fogarty should have been content to rest on his laurels; but the truth is that in so doing, Fogarty would have failed to achieve the ultimate exploitation of his grand plan. Unlike the Roman period, these years were not ones of boredom; he was simply waiting for his plan to mature, and while he waited he devoted much of his time to polishing the details.

At the end of four patient years he began growing a beard of massive proportions. At the end of the fifth year he returned to the United States—as Alexandre Dumas Fogarty.

A. D. Fogarty, the art sleuth.

A brief and secretive reunion with the admirable Fragelli had produced yet another set of documents, signed by the highest authorities, validating his status. It was for this occasion that Fragelli created a warm and charming note of introduction from Mr. Berenson, acknowledging A. D. Fogarty as his peer in the field of artistic criticism.

"Alexandre was always a secretive, moody lad," declared T. J. Fogarty, president of the Atlantic Dental Supply Corporation and Fogarty's only surviving relative, on later questioning by the press. "We had no idea what he was up to all those years in Europe."

For the truth is, Alexandre Dumas Fogarty hit the American art world like a copper-bearded thunderbolt. He had, he advised the art editor of The New York *Intelligencer,* been conducting certain studies in art forgeries when word had reached him of a vast scheme perpetrated some years previously by a renegade Englishman on a number of American museums. Outraged, he had traced this report, sparing himself no effort, and had at last located in Naples the three Italian artists who had been the innocent dupes of this sinister Briton. They had freely admitted their manufacture of art reproductions which they sincerely believed would be sold as such, and were appalled when informed that this had not been the case. No, they did not know to which museums their innocent forgeries had been sold, but they would and could furnish complete descriptions of all their bogus antiquities.

From coast to coast museum curators began living in a nightmare as Fogarty moved among them—naturally charging a handsome fee for his services. The director of the Walla Walla, Wash., Municipal Center for the Fine Arts resigned under a cloud when Fogarty pointed out no less than three fake Holbeins from the brush of Pasquale

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Torsini, to cite only one instance. And then Fogarty encountered a mystery of increasingly disturbing proportions. Some of his fakes had vanished.

When you are charging a museum several thousand bucks for your professional services as a detector of forgeries, it comes as a rude shock to discover that the forgery you have so carefully planted is no longer around to be detected. Thus the Etruscan bronze that Fogarty had foisted off on Charlotte, North Carolina, was no longer edifying the culture-hungry of that Piedmontese city; the Canaletto he had unloaded on Evansville, Indiana, was no longer the pride of that Ohio River municipality.

It took him a long and desperately boring evening with one Dr. Theobald Terwilliger, curator of the Harrison T. Waller Memorial Gallery, of Harrisburg, Pa., to ascertain what had happened. He had dined Dr. Terwilliger in the finest restaurant in Harrisburg, plying him with preprandial cocktails, wines of the richest and most delicate vintages (as these things are understood in Harrisburg), and post-prandial brandy dating from the fall of the House of Hohenzollern.

"But I was certain that I had read something in the magazines about your museum's purchase of a hitherto unknown Van Baburen," Fogarty told Terwilliger in the injured tones of a man whose memory has betrayed him. A cunning gleam lighted Terwilliger's eyes, and Fogarty swiftly ordered him another brandy.

"Fact ish, -er, is," Terwilliger said in a conspiratorial whisper, "we did." He giggled nervously. "Got had three ways from Shunday on that one. Trushteesh would have thrown a fit, if they'd ever dish, -er, discovered it."

"But *you* did?" Fogarty asked incredulously.

"Shpotted that Englishman—just about your shize, come to think of it—like I shay, shpotted him for a phoney the minute I laid eyesh on him." (My foot, Fogarty thought angrily)

"And so?" Fogarty could not conceal his eagerness.

"Well, you know how it goes in this bish—business, confound it! What I mean to shay ish, ask me no queshions and I'll tell you no liesh. Maybe this Englishman had got hold of the real thing, and how wasn't any of my affair. I mean, it *looked* like the real thing to me. Sho I bought it." (And how well I remember *that* transaction, Fogarty thought. Terwilliger cleverly haggling over the price, and his undisguised triumph when I permitted him to knock me down to his final offer. Nasty little man!)

"And then?"

"Got to thinking. Shent a sample of the canvash down to the National Gallery in Washington. They

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shent it back with a note telling me it had been made in England between 1926 and 1931. Ol' Van Baburen died in 1624. Shimple?" Terwilliger accepted still another brandy. "Sort of thing could cost a man his job in this racket, fy'understand? Sho, I did the only shensible thing I could do under the shircumshtanches—I unloaded it."

"Where?" Fogarty asked, masking his shock at this creature's base duplicity.

"Dexter, tha'sh where. Go shee Clarissha Shaunders, down in Dexter. Shweet girl, really shweet, but naive, you follow me?"

"If you won't tell, neither will I," Fogarty advised this vessel of deceit.

"You're all heart, Fogarty," Terwilliger replied, choking up.

"Forget it," Alexandre Dumas said, his tone edged with contempt. "Some day I may be able to put you in line for a Cellini saltcellar."

As a result of this conversation, Fogarty journeyed to Dexter, a spotlessly clean little city in the heart of the Pennsylvania Dutch country, full of rosy-cheeked natives who spoke a dialect somewhere between Prussian and Middle English. Registering at the Hotel Phineas Dexter, the community's principal hostelry, he made his way to the Wilma L. Blastfogle Memorial Art Museum, which occupied a vast old townhouse near the city's center. Unobtrusively and as a typically interested visitor, he wandered through its various rooms.

What he found staggered him.

Theobald Terwilliger had not been the only one of his esoteric calling to unload on the naive Miss Clarissa Saunders. This innocent female had been bilked by no less than a dozen of her professional colleagues—for there before Fogarty's bewildered eyes were gathered all those of his forgeries missing elsewhere. All, all were there—including Akron's Grecian boxer and the superb Van Dyck that once graced the Confederate Memorial Gallery of the Living Arts of Augusta, Ga.

Fogarty stood bemused; he was by no means a cruel man, and the prospect of what his disclosures would do to the career of Miss Clarissa Saunders gave him pause.

On the other hand this foolish woman had done him out of thousands of dollars he might otherwise have received for his detective services. By her passion to acquire additional treasures to sweeten the memory of the late Wilma L. Blastfogle, she had deprived him of the rightful fruits of his toil.

Fogarty steeled his heart and made for the curator's office.

"Miss Saunders is out at the moment," Miss Eustacia Wilkes informed him. "Can I help you?"

"I am Alexandre Dumas Fogarty. Perhaps you have heard of me?"

"Yes, indeed, sir. The famous art detective. Miss Saunders will be so

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

thrilled." Miss Wilkes stared with undisguised admiration at Fogarty's magnificent copper-colored beard.

"Then if you would be good enough to ask her to call me at my hotel." And with a courteous bow, Fogarty withdrew.

He had not been in his room more than half an hour when the telephone rang and he heard for the first time the dulcet tones of Clarissa Saunders. It would be well, he decided, to have a look at this female before he set about the fearsome task of destroying her, and he therefore suggested that she meet him in the Baron von Steuben Room, the hotel's mock-Revolutionary cocktail lounge.

"I'd love to," she rejoined cheerfully. "Give me fifteen minutes. I'll recognize you by your beard."

Forgarty hung up, feeling a distinct sense of unease. He had expected the dry, crisp tones of an elderly and opionionated spinster, not the gay and girlish sounds he had heard.

Nevertheless, he had his duty to perform.

His waiter had just set his Martini before him when the heavy wood-slab door of the Baron von Steuben Room opened to disclose a tall, slender, and absolutely the most ravishing woman Fogarty had beheld in all 36 years of his bachelorhood. She was clad in a misty pink sweater and gray flannel skirt that outlined modestly and without undue emphasis a figure of truly classic proportions.

This vision of blonde loveliness swiftly adjusted her vision to the dimness of the room and catching sight of the only beard then present, she walked surely and gracefully towards Fogarty's table, her hand outstretched and a smile on her perfectly shaped lips.

Fogarty staggered to his feet, confounded.

"You must be Mr. Fogarty," she said as they shook hands. "I've been reading so much about you lately. Welcome to Dexter."

She slipped into the chair opposite his with the lithe movement of a ballet dancer, and he felt his senses reeling even as he inhaled the first faint fragrance of her perfume. "Same as yours," she added when he asked for her preference in refreshment. Another Martini was forthwith furnished.

"I take it," she said calmly, "you've been through the museum."

Fogarty nodded unhappily. "Merely a cursory inspection," he muttered, unable to take his eyes from her face, a face which would have fetched a shout of joy from Renoir, a moan of ecstasy from Monet. "Just passing through and thought I'd drop by for a look around."

"Fine," said this splendid young woman equably. "What do you think of my fakes?"

Alexandre Dumas stared at her, dumfounded.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Fakes?" he finally managed to croak.

"One of the finest collections in the east," she declared, grinning proudly.

"But . . . if you knew they were fakes, why . . . ?" Fogarty stopped, for once in his life at a loss for words. Clarissa's face (unaccountably, he found himself already thinking of her as Clarissa) grew abruptly grave.

"Because I've got a tiny budget, and because they're good fakes—so good they fooled some of my pompous friends in the big museums," she said quietly. "Dexter might never have seen a Canaletto if it weren't for my forgery, and does it really matter that much if my Van Dyck isn't a true Van Dyck? The point is, it's the best imitation of Van Dyck this town can afford; it has his style and composition, even down to his brushwork. That's what counts. Now Dexter knows what a Van Dyck looks like and can really appreciate him."

"But your trustees?" Fogarty gurgled—he was aghast at her frankness.

"They've known from the beginning, ever since that insufferable little man, Terwilliger, from Harrisburg, offered me his fake Van Baburen. After all, I'm in touch with the National Gallery, too. But I put it to the trustees that Dexter might never see Van Baburen's work and style otherwise. And I will say for the Pennsylvania Dutch that they're realists. My trustees are behind me to a man, bless their hearts."

"And the townspeople? The local newspapers? Do they know?" Visions of a tar-and-feather party filled Fogarty's brain.

"Certainly they know. What's more important, they understand and approve of what I'm trying to do. We've got a fine representative collection of art which, if it were all genuine, we simply could never hope to have. You know, Mr. Fogarty, I'd like to meet the character who brought all this stuff in from Europe; for my money, he deserves a medal."

"Miss Saunders," Fogarty began unsteadily, his emotions clouding his vision and lumping his throat.

"Call me Clarissa," she said, dimpling beautifully, "and I don't mind if I do have another Martini, Mr. Fogarty."

"Call me Alex," Fogarty begged in tones that rang with sincerity. "And Clarissa, there's something I feel I ought to tell you . . ."

The Fogartys are living in Paris now, Alexandre Dumas having sold the villa in Villefranche and Mrs. Fogarty having resigned her post with the Wilma L. Blastfogle Memorial Art Museum to accompany her husband in his new career as a buyer of art (legitimate) for sale in the American market. True, they deal extensively in reproduc-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tions, each carefully labeled as a product of the di Venati Brothers shops, Naples, Italy; and their reputation among American art dealers is second to none.

Only one reminder of Fogarty's former ways is to be seen in their charming flat off the Boulevard Haussmann. Mrs. Fogarty refuses flatly to part with it. It is a saltcellar, widely attributed to Cellini.

"Alexandre Dumas Cellini, that is," Fogarty tells awed dinner guests, grinning above his spectacular red beard.

The beard? Why of course he still has it. There's no explaining a woman's reasoning, but Clarissa simply won't let him shave it off. She likes it.

CURRENT MYSTERY AND SUSPENSE HARDCOVERS

AUTHOR	TITLE	PUBLISHER	PRICE	ON SALE
Audemars, Pierre	THE CROWN OF NIGHT	Harper & Row	$3.50	11/21/62
Bush, Christopher	THE CASE OF THE DEAD MAN GONE	The Macmillan Co.	$3.50	10/15/62
Egan, Lesley	AGAINST THE EVIDENCE	Harper & Row	$3.50	11/21/62
Gale, John	DEATH FOR SHORT	The Macmillan Co.	$3.50	10/15/62
Harvester, Simon	TIGER IN THE NORTH	Walker and Company	$3.50	12/10/62
LeCarre, John	CALL FOR THE DEAD	Walker and Company	$3.50	12/10/62
Lockridge, Frances and Richard	NIGHT OF SHADOWS	J. B. Lippincott Co.	$3.50	11/28/62
MacDonald, Philip	DEATH AND CHICANERY	Doubleday & Co., Inc.	$3.50	11/2/62
North, Gil	SERGEANT CLUFF GOES FISHING	British Book Centre	$3.25	11/5/62
Pentecost, Hugh (Editor)	CREAM OF THE CRIME	Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc.	$3.95	11/5/62
Scholey, Jean	THE DEAD PAST	The Macmillan Co.	$3.95	10/29/62
Stout, Rex	GAMBIT: A NERO WOLFE NOVEL	The Viking Press	$3.50	10/12/62
Stratton, Roy	THE DECORATED CORPSE	M. S. Mill Co., Inc.	$3.50	11/7/62
Troy, Simon	SECOND COUSIN REMOVED	The Macmillan Co.	$3.50	10/15/62
Unekis, Richard	THE CHASE	Walker and Company	$3.50	11/19/62
Walsh, Thomas	THIEF IN THE NIGHT	Simon & Schuster	$3.50	11/9/62
Warner, Douglas	DEATH OF A SNOUT	Walker and Company	$3.50	12/10/62
Waugh, Hillary	BORN VICTIM	Doubleday & Co., Inc.	$3.50	11/16/62
White, Lionel	OBSESSION	E. P. Dutton & Co.	$2.95	11/12/62
Withers, E. L.	THE BIRTHDAY	Doubleday & Co., Inc.	$3.50	11/2/62

For paperback listings, turn to page 101

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDITORS' FILE CARD

AUTHOR: **THOMAS WALSH**

TITLE: ***Homecoming***

TYPE: Crime and Detection

LOCALE: United States

TIME: The Present

COMMENTS: *Eddie Riley had run away at 18, and it was ten years before he came home—with two strangers accompanying him. And after the first shock of it, his sister Margaret had that strange foreboding, that strange fear . . .*

MARGARET KNEW HIM AT ONCE, the moment she opened the door and saw him cut out of the porch darkness by the glow of the light behind her, with the other two men flanking him, a step in back at each side, and the faint, loose smile unchanged and graven on his lips.

The ten years seemed only to have sharpened his small features and made them quieter, more intent; he still was slender and dapperly dressed, in a fine double-breasted blue suit, a black, snap-on bow tie set neatly between coat lapels at the inverted white triangle of his shirt.

"Hello," he said. "I'll bet you don't even know me, Sis."

The mustache moved tightly as he grinned at her. Precise, curved, trimmed up from the mouth, the narrow dark strip did not give his face age but a dark kind of boldness under the black eyes that were bright and quick-moving, with the same small core of secrecy, of contained and hidden amusement, centered in the irises. Margaret would have known him by them, by the smile, if everything else about him had changed.

"Eddie," Margaret said. "You're Eddie."

The surprise in her was too sudden, too complete, to be touched by excitement in that first moment. Opening the door wider, she kissed his cheek; behind her was the

Copyright 1936 by Crowell-Collier Corporation.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sound of Pop's steps as he came from the kitchen into the hall.

"And Mr. Riley," Eddie said, grinning again. "How'd you like to help me work my way through college?"

Pop stared at him a moment. Then he could just grip his hand with his plump face beginning to shine dazedly, and stutter. "Well, boy, it's—it's—Eddie! Eddie! Why didn't you write? Why didn't you let me know where you were? Why didn't you tell us you were coming?"

Eddie stepped in through the doorway, watching him with that lazy boy's smile, and the dark, secretly amused eyes.

"Keep your shirt on, Pop. I didn't know myself I'd be coming back until yesterday. Then I thought it would be nice to surprise you."

The two men followed him in. The blond one in the belted camel's-hair coat took off his hat and smiled at Margaret. The dark one stood quietly against the door. All the time Pop was talking in his stuttery, excited voice, while Eddie put his bag down on the floor and looked around with something careful and quick in his eyes.

"Now, Pop," Eddie said, "you know how those things are. I meant to write, sure. I just kept putting it off. You and Margaret still alone here, Pop?"

They were, Pop told him, hurrying before them into the kitchen, his broad face shining, his breath coming short. If Eddie had only written they'd have had something hot ready. Now— He turned to Margaret vaguely. Was there anything?

A pick-up would do, Eddie said —coffee. They weren't hungry.

While Margaret prepared ham and eggs and fried potatoes he said that he'd often wanted to write, even to come back, but there was that old Navy thing hanging fire. The one place they'd have been sure to watch was his father's home. That's why he'd just sent the cards, without signing them. And there couldn't even be too many of those. Even after ten years the mails might be watched.

"Yes," Pop said, his eyes clouding. "There's always been that, Eddie. Only—well, I've thought of it often. I thought it might have been my fault. It wasn't because of anything I did that you ran away, Eddie?"

"Don't you worry about that," Eddie said. "It was the town, Pop —I guess I was a crazy kid just running wild." He looked around the room, nodding. "It all even seems the same." The dark man—Mr. Stern, Eddie called him—was sitting next to him, and Eddie touched his arm. "I haven't been back in ten years, Lou. And now it don't seem that long. It's hard to believe. Pop looks younger now than he did then."

"Ah," Pop said, nodding his head uncomfortably. "I've worried

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about you, Eddie. Many a night. Not knowing where you were was hard. I'd even thought," Pop said, rubbing his thumb slowly under his chin, "that they'd have forgotten that Navy thing, Eddie. Eighteen you were; if you made your peace with them they mightn't be hard. They wouldn't be, on a boy."

Leaning back in the chair, Eddie smiled at him.

"How'd you like to know that's all fixed up? I've been doing pretty good for myself, Pop; I know some people—big people—who could smooth out a lot of things worse than a kid who didn't know what it was all about, deserting ship. That's all fine, Pop. They're seeing to it in Washington now. Another week and they write it off the books."

"Thank God," Pop said heavily. "It's a weight off my shoulders, Eddie. You were a good boy—reckless maybe, but no harm in you."

"That isn't even the best part," Eddie said, smiling at him. "Mr. Stern and Mr. Carter here are thinking of building a factory in town. They're Stern and Carter—hardware. That's why I took a chance on coming down before things were fixed in Washington. If they build it they're going to put me in charge—general manager, Pop. How would you like that?"

Mr. Stern cleared his throat. "I'm sorry," he said, "that Eddie said that. I wouldn't want you building any hopes, Mr. Riley. Nothing's definite yet; we only came down to look around. If we find a good spot cheap enough we'll buy. But you know how people are, Mr. Riley, when they find out they have something you want. Prices go up to where you can't touch them. If that happens—" He smiled faintly.

Pouring fresh coffee, Margaret turned to see the blond man, Carter, rubbing a hand over a quiet, foolish grin. It was a jar to the surprise that had held her silent, listening to them—an odd surprise that faintly, somewhere deep, held foreboding. It was almost as if she was not glad to see Eddie back. Trying to dismiss that thought, she looked at his dark, boyish face, grave now, as he spoke to Pop across the table.

He'd been reckless, Pop had said. Something more, perhaps, that Pop had never learned. There was that business at Grant's, where he'd worked for a week. But she'd paid it all back, every penny, and Pop had never known anything about it. Old Mr. Grant liked Pop; he'd kept it quiet.

And there were other things. They troubled her now, though she tried to tell herself she was silly. Eddie was her brother, and she was glad to have him back. It was only that after ten years he might have been a stranger, the only things remembered about him, the hard, secret eyes, the thin smile.

She thought, oddly, that if those things had gone from him, if they had changed, the warmth and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

closeness she fought to feel would have come easily, when she kissed him, without struggle. The foreboding would not have been in her.

"You see how it is?" he said earnestly. "I'll have to lay low until I hear from Washington, Pop. And you and Margaret mustn't tell anyone we're here—not even Mr. Stern or Mr. Carter. Because if that got around people would be able to figure out why they came; they wouldn't be able to look over the town and negotiate quietly for a site. If you want me here, you and Margaret will have to keep quiet, Pop. For two or three days, a week maybe, no one must know we're here. Not until everything's settled. They'd give me five years for deserting from the Navy. And if they caught me before my friends fix it it's all spoiled. I'd go to jail, Pop. They couldn't help me then."

Across the table Margaret drank her coffee quietly. It might all be true; she had no way of knowing. But when she heard Pop's voice she felt afraid, and with something fierce and protective rising in her she thought that he couldn't have come back to trick Pop again. He couldn't. Why would he lie?

Afterward in her room she thought that Eddie was her brother and she loved him. He'd grown up, out of wildness; he'd changed. And she was glad he was back. Glad, glad . . .

But the small touch of fear was on her as she fell asleep.

Eddie and the men slept late the next morning, so that she and Pop had breakfast alone. Over his second cup of coffee Pop stopped and looked up at her.

"Wednesday night," he said. "Your Johnny will be up. But there mustn't be a word, girl. You heard Eddie—no one's to see him. You'll wait at the gate. You won't mind that?"

He nodded at her solemnly, and the action brought the uneasiness back somehow, wrinkling her dark brows.

But Pop didn't feel it. Backing his sedan away from the shiny dark car of Lou Stern that crowded it in the small garage, he was full of plans. Nobody now would remember that old talk about Eddie—not when the factory was built, and Eddie was Mr. Riley, General Manager. He was going to be somebody, and Pop had been sure of it all the time. The boy had brains—good blood, Pop said, nodding to himself, was bound to show.

When he had parked his car at the railroad station he stood for a moment in the agent's door, and winked at Margaret knowingly as she waited to cross Lathrop Street to her office. Not a word, his uplifted finger cautioned her. Not a whisper.

The foreboding faded and died in her under the normal matter-of-factness of Mr. Larkin's voice, the crisp, sharp rush of typing his dictation. It seemed nothing but silli-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ness. The blond man and Mr. Stern were—funny; but that might be merely because she didn't like them.

At eight that evening, when she met Johnny at the front gate, the foreboding had nearly gone.

"I thought we'd walk," she told Johnny.

He bowed low, holding her hand.

"Your slightest whim," he said. "We walk, madam."

Dark and quiet under a line of oaks, the path crossed the brow of the ridge and meandered out to starlit intimacy on the far side. Their house was the last one on Hill Street, cut off from view by a fringe of woods around it, and looking back she could see the yellow blur of windows, patched across by the thick spread of tree limbs.

Now, with Johnny, the foreboding had entirely vanished; the reason for secrecy had ceased to have anything furtive about it. Pop was down there talking to him, and Margaret thought it had only been the first surprise, the shock. Pop was pretty happy. Nothing else mattered a great deal.

Below them the town spread out in a light-filtered spray of streets and houses, glittering through the May darkness with something familiar and comfortable about them. There was a bench on the brow of the hill where they had sat before, where they sat now; and Johnny told her how things were going at the bank. They were pretty busy; often he didn't get out to work on the house until after seven. But in August it would be finished—surely in August—and they talked mostly about that time. Miraculously it was eleven when he glanced at his watch.

But they sat for a while longer in the sweet, vague darkness of the meadow; and then they came down the hill, and Johnny kissed her at the gate. In the parlor Lou Stern, set solidly on his chair, was talking to Pop.

"We were out this morning," he said. "Mr. Carter and myself. Just for a short while—we don't want to be seen too much. But it looks like a live town, Mr. Riley. If we find the property we want at the price we can pay I haven't seen any place I'd like better."

On the couch Eddie lay back with his arms under his head, a cigarette in his mouth and his eyes moving lazily as he saw her.

"Hello," he said. "How were the movies?"

"Walking," Pop told him. "Out walking."

He winked portentously at Lou Stern.

When Eddie smiled, his lips moved full and slow, then remained still for a long time, drawn smoothly back into the boyish, apple-flushed cheeks. He seemed to be smiling to himself, at something no one else saw, at some remembered place or moment that brought

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with it a remote and singular humor. After Lou Stern had gone upstairs he watched the ceiling like that, while she and Pop talked and asked him questions.

He was an accountant, Eddie said; he'd picked it up knocking about. If it hadn't been for the Navy thing, and the fear that they'd be still watching, he'd have come back to see them. Until that was settled he'd had to keep low, but he had a fine job now.

In his chair, with the cigar that Lou Stern had given him unlit in his fingers, Pop listened, nodding slowly now and again, a bright glitter in his eyes. He'd always known, he said; Eddie had the stuff in him.

Before she went up to bed Margaret crossed to the couch and kissed him.

"Eddie," she whispered. "You're going to be good to Pop? He missed you, Eddie."

"Okay," Eddie said. "Okay, Sis. You don't have to worry about that this time."

Pop drowsed in his chair, with his hands on the arms, his broad face relaxed under the lamplight. Margaret kissed him lightly, her heart warm. It was a fine thing that his son had come back. Eddie watched her, smiling, the thin dark glitter in his eyes.

Long after, she woke in darkness to a faint mutter of voices directly below her, in the kitchen. She listened to them sleepily before the thought struck her that Pop might be ill; then she got quickly out of bed. But when she was halfway down the back stairs she stopped, recognizing the voices.

"A hell of a thing," the blond man said, with something thick in his voice. "Where does he get off taking my liquor away? I need a drink, Lou."

Lou Stern's voice was lower, more cautious, but through the open door it was distinct enough.

"Forget that," he said. "If Rosy heard you—"

"So what?" Carter asked hoarsely. "So what? Who the hell is Rosy Daniels? If I feel like pulling out of here I pull out. And maybe I do feel like it."

"You won't pull out on Rosy Daniels," Lou Stern said softly. "Maybe he is red-hot; but you won't pull out on him, Artie. He planned this thing too long to let any heel spoil it. The one time he was picked up the cops couldn't get any dope on him. They don't know who he really is; no one knows but us. In the big town he's Rosy Daniels—but here he's Eddie Riley."

"Okay," Carter muttered. "And what does that get us?"

Lou Stern cursed him in a gentle voice.

"You can't see it—you're too dumb. But Rosy worked in Steel's when he was a kid, during summer vacations, and Steel's got a payroll that runs to thirty grand.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We knock that over Friday while the old man and the sister are working. Then we duck back here and keep stalling them with that factory line until things cool off. We can lay here a week if we have to. We don't go out and the car's in the garage, and if we go back over the hill nobody spots us going or coming. It's as safe as Joliet. In a week all we do is pull out nice and quiet. The pressure's off then."

"Hardware factory!" The blond man chuckled drunkenly. "Even the old man wouldn't be dumb enough to believe that after the stick-up."

"Listen—you," Lou Stern said. "If they find out they keep quiet, don't they? Isn't Rosy his kid? What do I have to draw the picture again for? You turning yellow?"

"Like hell," Carter said.

On the stairs Margaret could hear him breathing; and the sound of it was like a charm that held her here, poised and with such lightness of body that she seemed to have no weight at all. Then there were the brief sounds of a scuffle, Lou Stern swore angrily, and the charm that held her broke.

In her room, bent tensely back against the closed door, she heard them pass. But after they had gone and it was quiet she did not relax; inside she seemed caught in a white-hot glow.

Against some inner, shrinking darkness she could see big cars careening with frenzied speed; she could see headlines and the unforgotten picture of a dying trooper, she could hear the cold, crisp voices of radio men—the reports from Racine, St. Paul, Detroit, Chicago. And the smaller towns—Mason City, Waterloo, Storm Lake and Portage, Logansport and Mishawaka. The incredible car passed through, it sometimes stopped, and in newsreels she had seen the gas-station men who had served them, the waitresses, smiling and excited before the camera, who had sold them food.

Rosy Daniels, Lou Stern had said—and now in her the name was a dreadful key, a cold burning that devoured her mind. Written blackly in blood and terror, and a spurting violence, across autumn and a frozen winter and the kind months of spring, it came before her now, alive and flaming. Rosy Daniels—and quietness for a month, with Rosy Daniels dead, Rosy Daniels hiding, Rosy Daniels fled to Canada.

But it was a simpler thing than any of those. Rosy Daniels had come home. There was a boy named Eddie Riley who was back out of darkness, out of ten years, out of blood and the terrible name that had not marked him, nor changed the lidded humor in his eyes.

Against the door Margaret whispered, "Pop! Pop!" Her heart was riven, her eyes too dry for tears and crying.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Her father was already up when she came down in the morning. With her checked apron distended tautly across his big front, his eyes intent and absorbed, he was mixing a huge bowl of batter, while the great iron pan warmed behind him, on the stove.

Pop had always been proud of his pancakes—man's food they were, and only a man could prepare them right. He was so absorbed that he did not notice Margaret's paleness; and when, half through her coffee, she heard Eddie and the others stirring upstairs, she rose and kissed Pop quickly. She knew she could not look at them, smile and talk; she said Mr. Larkin wanted her early that day.

Outside on the walk a light breeze swept in smooth long puffs across the valley, from hills on the far side bathed in clear colorless morning light. Before her the Bennett twins spewed out through their gateway, and ran off with schoolbags banging against their scrubbed knees. Once, very long ago it seemed, she and Eddie had come down the hill like that; but, as she tried to remember, the impressions came back vague and blurred, and the great, quiet pain flowed in her heart.

It did not change all morning. The swift and frenzied succession of voices, of figures, started again in some small part of her mind, as if they had a life of their own, independent of her will. Quietly insistent there came the urgent whisper of the terrible name, faint cries, and the bold, dark eyes, the boyish face, the silent and furtive amusement.

There was something she could do, something she must do, and at lunch time, meeting Johnny, she ate and talked with some detached part of herself that did familiar, accustomed things, trying to make clear to herself what it was.

"Here," Johnny said, when they were having dessert. "What's the matter with you? You look as if you don't know what I'm talking about, hon."

She tried to force the thickness in her cheeks into a smile.

"I'm sorry, Johnny. I'll try to do better. Do you—are you busy at the bank?"

Johnny shrugged, frowning at her.

"They keep me going," he answered. "Fridays I get out with Jim Elting, on the payrolls. But I don't even get a kick out of carrying the gun any more. When I first started, it used to make me feel like Frank Buck."

"The gun," Margaret said. "The gun, Johnny. You—I'd forgotten that. I thought— You and Jim Elting bring the money to Steel's."

"I told you that months ago," Johnny said. "Not that you have to worry, hon. It's just like delivering mail. Nothing ever happens in this town."

"No," Margaret answered. "Not in this town."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Perplexed, Johnny looked at her.

"But if something did," Margaret asked steadily, "if anything ever came up, Johnny—if someone like Rosy Daniels tried to take the money—"

Johnny's young jaw hardened. "They'd have a time. Elting carries a gun too, and they've made us practice twice a week. Now I could nip that little curl away from the back of your ear at fifty feet—only I love you too much to try."

"But you wouldn't try to fight them," Margaret said. "Not Rosy Daniels, Johnny. That would be *foolish.*"

"I don't know," Johnny said, his blue eyes narrowed. "Maybe if I saw him I'd be too scared. Maybe I wouldn't. Sometimes I've thought that if I ever got a chance to line up on that baby . . . He—he isn't really human, hon."

He broke off to stare at her. "What's the matter with you?"

Margaret whispered, "Nothing."

"Sulphur and molasses," Johnny said. "You look like you could stand half a bottle. You're taking the afternoon off. If you don't ask old Larkin I will. Come on."

At the office Mr. Larkin said, "I thought you were looking fagged. If you come in before you're right again I'll fire you. Today—let's see—is Thursday. Don't try to come down before Monday. Now git, Miss Riley."

Lathrop Street flowed busily with afternoon traffic. She walked slowly along it, knowing that Pop wouldn't be through until six, and that at home she'd be alone with the three. In the sunny street she felt the coldness solid and heavy inside her.

She could not go home, not without Pop to hold to, to defend; alone she shrank from them, with no courage and no warmth in her. It was odd that Pop gave her fierceness, and something unyielding that fought down the shrinking. But without him it was not there; and in the end she took a bus and rode out to the Heights on the other side of town.

There white houses shone across tended strips of lawn, window boxes drooped lovely greenery, small crocus beds and yellow jonquils rested like birds against the warm earth. After leaving the bus she walked along placid paths—two squares, to the house that Johnny was building.

It wasn't very large, and only the framework had been completed. Angled and barred, the new wood shone cleanly yellow in the sunlight, with a kind of warm bareness about it; from the front doorway she could see the crossbeams in the floor, littered with paper-thin shavings and pressed heavily about with the clean smell of the wood, and the pungent dustiness of cement bags. Johnny had been able to afford only one man; at nights, and on Saturdays, he came out to work himself. She looked at it quietly, and spoke to the man; surely in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

August, Johnny had said . . .

Presently she walked on to the field in back. Tomorrow at two, or a little after, they'd be waiting at the side entrance to Steel's—behind the door, perhaps. In the shadow of the stairway there'd be the bright flash of guns, and the look of Johnny's eyes, the heavy, brooding face of Carter, the deadly quiet Lou Stern. Wild in his young years, Pop had said; but that passed off. He knew. He'd be a good boy—a good son. The hardware factory—incredibly, horribly, it was funny. The man Carter had laughed about it. Surely in August . . .

For a while her thoughts seemed to stop there, as if they had lost the vitality to go on. It would not happen; she could not let it. She could talk to Eddie, beg him to go away. But if he wouldn't go away?

She thought of the other way, the the sure way, a few words and police and headlines—but through that came the desolate shame in Pop's eyes.

She knew that it was not Eddie and the thing that they would do to him, in Wisconsin or Indiana or Iowa, whichever claimed him first, that roused the anguish in her. Always, always, it was Pop.

Nothing had touched the secret darkness that she saw in Eddie's eyes; it was as if he were off in some far place, watching them from a great and uncrossable distance, and unable to understand their words or their actions. She thought of him as a stranger, a phantom; sullen and silent, he would face whatever came, and he would not be touched. But Pop would live; Pop would . . .

When she got up and walked again, the sunlight had died; a tranquil, misty dusk was thickening in the valley. Lights sprang up and cars wound along the hill roads, with golden glowing eyes. At home, in the bright kitchen, they were eating, and in his smoothly unctuous voice Lou Stern was asking about labor. Assuring him, Pop's voice was eager.

She stopped in the corridor with her hand pressed to her eyes, then went on to her room quietly, not to let them hear her. On a plain sheet of paper she printed some words in pencil which she did not sign; later, after she had eaten, she put it in an envelope and walked downtown.

When it had dropped through the slot in the post-office door she turned away quickly, fighting a sudden sickness, the lights, the traffic sounds, the people on the walk below, spinning about her in a confused phantasmagoria, and only the thought of Pop clearly visioned in her mind.

It's done, she thought—done, done, done. And nothing could change it now, not even her wish. Not even Pop.

It was noon the next day before she came downstairs. Eddie and the others were in the parlor, and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as she crossed the hall there was an instant's panic in her mind that Eddie might try to stop her. He came out to the doorway, dressed neatly in blue, freshly shaved, with the ends of the black bow tie bent back over the points of his collar, and his hands in his jacket pockets.

His voice was quiet and precise, nothing menacing about it.

"Pop said you were sick. How're you feeling now?"

"Fine," Margaret said. A hand on the cool metal knob steadied her. "It's only a headache. I'll get some aspirins. But I'll be back to fix your lunch."

Eddie said, "Don't rush," from the doorway, watching her with something cold and rather puzzled in his face. She walked with an odd, stiff carefulness down the hill, not looking back; it was one o'clock before she reached Steel's.

There a blurred kind of despair gripped her, for in the first moment, looking casually about, she saw nothing changed. A crank's letter, they might have thought; they must get others like it all the time.

Then in an empty second-floor office across the street from Steel's a face advanced out of shadow and held close to the sill for a brief moment. Chief Silverman looked up and down the block; a slim man selling peanuts from a cart under him took off his hat and scratched his head. Usually the man, small and bearded, was nervous about policemen; but now one came along the street and passed the peanut vendor without disturbing him.

Every thing else was normal.

Margaret went home, entering the house through the yard and the rear door. In the kitchen she put pots of water on the stove, making noise with them, so Eddie would hear it. Then she sat down and watched the clock on the wall.

At ten minutes to two she got up, turned off the gas, and went inside.

It was shortly after two that Johnny started from the bank, and in their car it would take perhaps ten minutes to get to Steel's. They'd start early, not to miss him, and she knew she had to wait for the last moment, when it was all arranged, and there was no way for Eddie to go on.

She would tell him the police were there, the trap was set, and there was nothing he could do against that fact. It was certain and immovable, and nothing could change it.

For a moment she stood in the parlor doorway, not talking to them and looking only at Eddie. She felt relaxed and sure as his sharp face turned slowly to her, the black pupils seeming to focus on her from some deep, faraway absorption.

In that instant of silence, while they looked at each other, the terrible name seemed utterly to vanish, without anything left behind it. He was Pop's son and her brother, and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

she could speak to him, he would understand. He must, he must. In a fraction of time that feeling swept over her and convinced her.

"You're Rosy Daniels," she said quietly. "I know that, Eddie."

With that quality of movement in him as if there were no effort, he got up softly, and Lou Stern came out from his chair. The blond man sat motionless, staring at her, his face twitching slightly.

"Who's outside?" Eddie said. There was no surprise in his voice, no panic. "Take a look, Lou."

She saw the dark man bend sideways to look through the window; but the action, Eddie's words, conveyed nothing to her. Watching Eddie, she was flaming and absorbed; she knew, she knew, that the terrible name was not true. Lou Stern or the blond man—but it wasn't Eddie. Not Eddie.

"Listen to me," Margaret said. "I heard you talking, and it isn't the factory; it's Steel's. Don't you see what it will do to Pop, Eddie? You can't do that; you don't want to. They're making you. Even if you wanted to, you couldn't, Eddie. I can stop you."

He stared at her quietly, without moving. It was Lou Stern who, in a great bound, was behind her, his hand over her mouth.

"Two old women," Lou Stern said. "Just walking by. She might yell, Rosy."

She remained quietly in Lou Stern's hold, not trying to free herself, looking at him. Filled with that dark life, with nothing else. Eddie did not answer the swart man; moving with the swiftness that was so smooth it seemed not swiftness, he came forward with a handkerchief in his hand. He had deft, hard fingers that pressed it into her mouth, far back, cruel to her breathing, in a flicker of time.

He said, turning to the window, "Better fix her in the chair, Lou. I'll see if the outside's clear. It's time we moved."

It wasn't until Lou Stern forced her down and drew her arms behind the chair that she understood. Then she fought, making mumbling sounds behind the gag. But Eddie did not look at her again.

"We'll get into the car in the garage," he said. "I'll drive. I know the streets."

His voice was quiet and hard and not excited. And all the time she was trying to tell him; with her eyes she tried to say *don't, don't, Eddie.*

Pop would have seen the thing in her eyes, or Johnny. But to Rosy Daniels it was another language; his ways were not Pop's ways, and those things he did not understand. Fantastically, in some remote way, they had always amused him.

Just for an instant, before he left, he bent over her.

"Sit tight," he said. "Just sit tight. If you don't want the old man to know, keep your mouth shut." Leaning behind her, he did some-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

thing to the bonds. "You can work out of them in a couple of minutes. But sit tight till we're gone."

She tried to talk past the thick wad of the gag. She tried to hold him with her eyes. Apple-cheeked, his black eyes shining, he straightened and passed like a shadow around her chair.

Something went with him out of the room—a stranger that enveloped him, through which she could not force her way. The terrible name, the charm and the guard, went with him; and behind it he lived, he had always lived, cut off, furtive, amused, proud that nothing could touch him.

After the car had gone up the hill, dust specks whirled and eddied slowly in the shafted sunlight of the room. In the table ashtray one of his cigarettes smoldered; narrow and gray and placid, its plume of smoke rose and broke, with the dust specks moving in it, slower and slower. Then without break they were gone; there was only the stilled, mild sunlight; and Margaret thought, *I couldn't, I couldn't. He wouldn't let me warn him.*

When the shots came she closed her eyes.

"It was kind of messy," Johnny said that night. "Chief Silverman hollered at them to put up their hands as soon as they got out of the car. He spotted them right away—you couldn't miss this Rosy Daniels; he was just like his name, small and rosy, like a kid. Just for a second I saw him look up and start to run and then there wasn't any center in his face. It was all over before I knew it had started. Silverman had a couple of crack shots in those upstairs windows. The three of them—like that. Dead."

Pop came in from the kitchen.

"All day," he said, "all over town, they've been talking about that. It's terrible, Johnny. I wouldn't listen to them."

"They came from Chicago," Margaret said, "in a black car. Now they're dead."

Pop nodded, troubled. "A terrible thing. He—he didn't say when he'd be back, Margaret?"

"No," Margaret answered, "he didn't, Pop." There wasn't any quiver in her voice. "The telegram was very important and they had to drive right back. He couldn't even wait to say goodbye, Pop."

"I guess he couldn't," Pop said, rubbing his chin.

He moved slowly, looking old.

Margaret thought it was just that he wouldn't get any more post cards. Eddie had builded better than he knew.

It had seemed there was nothing she could feel again, but when she heard Pop's feet on the stairs she began to cry softly, in Johnny's arms. The tears broke in her the grief, the secret, shamed fierceness, and the desolate pain. Words came; and Johnny held her, and stroked her hair.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a new story by

EDITORS' FILE CARD

AUTHOR:	**HUGH PENTECOST**
TITLE:	***The Man With the Sixteen Beards***
TYPE:	Horse Racing Story
LOCALE:	Saratoga, New York
TIME:	1896
COMMENTS:	*A "period" story about Saratoga, King of the Spas, and J. Vincent Parrish, King of the Gamblers—except that Parrish bet only on sure things. (Where have you heard that before?)*

THE ARRIVAL OF MR. J. VINCENT Parrish at Saratoga Springs on that hot summer afternoon in 1896 drew no surface attention. The crowd at the railroad depot, watching the train approach slowly across Broadway, Saratoga's main street, was agog with anticipation; but it was doubtful if anyone gave a second look at the tall dark Mr. Parrish, elegant in a gray business suit and black fedora and carrying a shiny malacca walking stick which, rumor had it, concealed a razor-sharp sword blade.

Mr. Parrish, first off the train, surveyed the crowd with cold contempt. He moved quickly towards a smart carriage drawn by two matching grays, dancing uneasily, their heads turned to the wheezing engine. A nice-looking young man wearing a black-and-white check suit with a fawn-colored vest and a high-crown derby set at a jaunty angle on his blond head, handled the grays expertly.

"I see you made it all right, sir," he said, as Mr. Parrish got in beside him.

Mr. J. Vincent Parrish removed a handsome gold watch from his vest pocket and frowned at it. "Twenty-four minutes late," he commented.

"You want me to handle the luggage now, sir, or come back for it later?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Before Parrish could answer, the voice of the crowd rose in a lusty cheer.

"Rubes!" Parrish said, spitting the word out between his thin lips. "Later, Musgrave. No one would pay the slightest attention to you now—not even to the President of the United States! Drive me straight to the Grand Union Hotel."

It is not recorded that anyone noticed the grays move briskly out of the station yard and head south on Broadway towards the Grand Union. Certainly no one at the station noticed, any more than anyone noticed the coach-and-four from the Belmont estate, waiting there to meet some special guests.

The attention of the crowd was focused on a private car coupled to the rear of the train. This car was rather special—indeed, it was unique—since its undertrucks were silver-plated. Its owner and his ravishing female companion had stepped out onto the rear platform of the car and were waving graciously to the crowd.

It is a matter of record that on that hot summer day in 1896 Mr. James Buchanan Brady, better known to his friends and to the country at large as Diamond Jim Brady, arrived with his constant companion, the gorgeous Miss Lillian Russell of theatrical fame, Miss Russell's gold-plated bicycle, and twenty-seven Japanese houseboys. Miss Russell, wearing a fabulous picture hat, also had with her a spaniel wearing an $1800 jeweled collar. It is said that one of the Japanese houseboys stole so many fifty-cent cigars from Diamond Jim that summer that the houseboy was able to open a cigar store when he returned to New York in the fall.

Waiting to take Miss Russell to her cottage was a carriage drawn by a pair of coal-black Hackney ponies. The carriage and harnesses were trimmed with solid silver, and the top-hatted coachman controlled his high-stepping team with dazzling white doeskin reins.

It was no wonder, therefore, that Mr. J. Vincent Parrish's arrival went unnoticed. It was even less wonder when out of the private car erupted a dozen extraordinarily beautiful girls, giggling and screaming in a pell-mell dash across the station platform to a waiting carry-all. These dozen beauties were Miss Russell's coterie of girl friends, recruited largely from the stage and brought to Saratoga for the summer to entertain Miss Russell's and Diamond Jim's male guests. Miss Russell called them her "Farm Flirts." They would all embark now for Miss Russell's cottage on North Broadway—an inconspicuous dwelling of forty rooms.

The lack of public interest in Mr. J. Vincent Parrish was not unnatural. The arrival at Saratoga, King of the Spas, of Diamond Jim

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Brady and the famous Lillian Russell was an event of importance. They would not have dared flaunt their relationship at Newport or any of the other Society resorts. As Berry Wall, a dandy of the day once remarked: "You must remember that Broadway only cuts across Fifth Avenue; it never parallels it." But in Saratoga it did. In Saratoga, Diamond Jim and "that woman," as old-time Saratogians usually referred to Miss Russell, were the uncrowned rulers of the summer community.

Mr. J. Vincent Parrish had nothing but contempt for the ostentatious Diamond Jim and his gorgeous lady. He was not disturbed at being ignored by the crowd. He knew that the news of his arrival had already been whispered along the Millionaire's Piazza at the United States Hotel to such big-time gamblers as Coal Oil Johnny Steele, Lucky Baldwin, and Bet-a-Million Gates. He knew that in the private office of the Casino on Congress Street, Mr. Richard Canfield, proprietor of the most fabulous gambling house in America, would have heard the news. He could imagine the grim smile on the lips of that suave and corpulent gentleman.

He knew, with even greater relish, that the news of his arrival would already have created a stir among the bookmakers out at the race track. His appearance in Saratoga would be the source of uneasiness to such famous bet coverers as Irish John Cavanaugh, Joe Jaeger The Boy Plunger, Joe "Big Store" Ullman, Orlando "Fashion Plate" Jones, and "Tiffany" Wolfgang.

It pleased J. Vincent Parrish to know that this aggregation of "money men" would be far more interested in his presence than in Mr. Brady's or Miss Russell's, with or without a fanfare of trumpets. Parrish did not believe in Fate, or in good or bad Fairies. He wouldn't have looked in a crystal ball if he'd had one, nor would he have believed what was there to see. Technically Parrish was not a gambler because he bet only on sure things. He would have laughed until it hurt if anyone had told him that Miss Lillian Russell, whom he'd never met and was never destined to meet, was about to cost him a cool $150,000.

And oddly enough, Miss Russell was to go to her grave without knowing that she was responsible for bringing Parrish to the dust after such experts as Canfield, Gates, Baldwin, and Steele had failed . . .

Young Musgrave pulled up the team of grays before the main entrance to the Grand Union. Parrish glanced up at the longest porch in the world—a quarter of a mile by actual measure. The rocking-chair brigade was out in full force, the ladies churning a breeze for themselves with palm-leaf fans. Except for one or two "wiseacres" who

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

concealed their interest, Parrish's arrival created no stir—not even the merest zephyr.

"You'll stable the horses and come directly to my suite," Parrish said to young Musgrave. His eyes narrowed. "The reports *are* ready for me?"

"Yes, sir," Musgrave said. "And I think you'll agree we've lined up a Jim-dandy."

"That's what you're paid for," Parrish said coldly. He got down from the trap, dusted at his trouser legs, and walked up across the porch and across the inner lobby to the desk.

An obsequious clerk greeted him with a toothy smile. "Glad to have you back with us, Mr. Parrish. Your regular suite has been held for you."

"You should have heard about it if it hadn't been," Parrish said. "Please send to the depot for my luggage. The Brady circus arrived on the same train. I couldn't be bothered to deal with it myself."

"It will be delivered to your rooms within half an hour, sir."

"Don't dawdle," Parrish said.

Instead of turning to the elevators, still powered by the original steam engine installed by the Otis Company, in 1875, Parrish walked across the lobby towards the doors leading into the grand ballroom. The folding doors were closed and locked. He tried them and a look of irritation spread over his cold chiseled face when he found he couldn't open them. An elderly Negro porter approached him.

"Welcome to Saratoga, Mr. Parrish, suh," the old man said.

"Be good enough to unlock this door for me, Wadsworth," Parrish said.

"The ballroom ain't open now, suh. I reckon—"

"Get the key," Parrish said.

"Yes, suh."

Wadsworth hurried away and Parrish stood there frowning, tapping his malacca stick against the toe of his polished boot.

Wadsworth scurried back with the key and opened one of the door panels.

"I'll be out in a moment," Parrish said, and stepped into the deserted room which was as large as a football field.

Straight-backed gold chairs were ranged along three sides of it. The bandstand, with its chairs and music racks, waited for the arrival of Mr. Victor Herbert and his orchestra which would play for the dancing that night.

Parrish was concerned only with the west wall of the room. It was covered from floor to ceiling by an enormous oil painting. The casual visitor to this room could learn about the painting from a brochure available at the hotel desk. It had been commissioned in 1870 from the French artist, Yvon, by A. T. Stewart, the dry-goods merchant. After two years and for a fee of $100,000, the painting was delivered

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to Stewart, who found that he couldn't get it into his New York house, let alone hang it there.

Stewart shipped it to the Grand Union Hotel, which he owned, and since 1872 it had covered the west wall of the ballroom. It has always been called "The Grand Centennial Painting" but the artist's title was "The Genius of America." It depicted a large and bosomy female "dispensing from a huge Horn of Plenty, learning, culture, healing and largesse generally, to the assembled nations of the world."

Parrish stared for a moment at the voluptuous lady, and then, with a wry smile, removed his hat and gave her an ironical bow.

"Something good for me this time, madam, if you please," he said.

If the lady smiled back at him there must have been irony in her smile too, for surely she could see ahead if Parrish could not. The lady in the painting was Parrish's only superstition. As a child, visiting the Spa with his father, Parrish had been fascinated by the lady's lush proportions and her promise of plenty. He had whispered some simple request to her on that first occasion and—miraculously!—his wish had been granted. She had never failed him since—as Canfield, Gates, "Tiffany" Wolfgang, and the others could testify. He had no reason to guess that on this occasion her smile was false.

Parrish left the ballroom, and ignoring the elevators walked up the black-walnut staircase to the mahogany bedroom suite reserved for him each season. Inside the suite he glanced at his tall, trim figure in a massive imported French mirror. He was satisfied with what he saw and satisfied with what the future seemed to hold in store for him.

Wilson Musgrave, the young man who had driven Parrish's carriage, entered the suite a moment later. Young Musgrave was born of a good family that had foundered on the economic rocks. He knew all the proper people in Society, and being an attractive bachelor and therefore in demand at the larger social functions where there is always a shortage of unattached males, he had entrée to all the best homes. But even if you dine out every night you need money—to dress, to travel from one resort to another, to buy an occasional gift for a lavish hostess. So it was that Wilson Musgrave found himself a member of the secret staff of the mysterious Mr. J. Vincent Parrish.

But once you got to know Parrish, there was really nothing mysterious about him or his operations. Parrish had two obsessions: he loved money and he loved to make it by outwitting other people who loved it. He could have been one of the great promoters of his time, but he chose to create a myth about himself and to play his game in secret. Saratoga was one of his favorite hunting grounds. The minute he

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

appeared at the Grand Union Hotel the bookmakers and gamblers knew that he was preparing to "make a killing"—and at their expense.

It was the nerve-racking task of Parrish's adversaries to try to guess in advance how the "gentle grafter" proposed to take them At Saratoga it was usually a bet on a horse—but on what horse and in what race? Obviously Parrish never approached the bookmakers in person to lay his bets. If he had, the odds would have melted away; the bookmakers might even have refused to take his money. Parrish's bets were always placed by a small army of "beards"—Saratoga's name for men who placed bets or made bids at the yearling sales for an unknown principal.

Parrish was not a "fixer." It would be no fun to buy a jockey to "go for the gloves"—to pull a horse. Parrish's pleasure came in analyzing a given situation and betting his money on something that had been overlooked by the wise ones. His judgment had, so far, never failed him. He would stay in Saratoga a day or so, clean up on his undetected coup, and then depart, laughing up his well pressed sleeve at the bookmakers who had been suckered into paying for his fun.

"I've had your preliminary reports," Parrish said to Musgrave. "Now I'd like to hear it in full."

"It's a beaut," young Musgrave said, accepting one of Parrish's imported Cuban cigars. "Old Dan Austin has been coming here for years with two or three horses. He runs a gyp stable—'gyp' standing for gypsy, not for dishonesty. This year he has a three-year-old in his barn named Buster McClure. Now, Buster McClure has aged old Dan. The horse has been clocked in record time at six furlongs, the mile, and a mile and a quarter. But he's cantankerous and mean and unpredictable. Sometimes he'll run in the morning and sometimes he won't, but he'll never run in a race. Exercise boys get sick when they're asked to give him a workout. He'll barge into a set of two-year-olds and knock them galley west, like a football player running the flying wedge. He's uncontrollable in the saddling enclosure. Jockeys won't accept a mount on him because he just can't be ridden; he always runs his own race and to hell with the rider."

"In short, he's an outlaw," Parrish said impatiently.

"An outlaw to end all outlaws," Musgrave said, inhaling on his cigar with pleasure. "He isn't worth what it costs to feed him. But—and this is important—if he *would* run in a race as he sometimes runs against the stop watch in the morning, he could turn around in the stretch and laugh at the best stake horses in Saratoga."

"But since he *won't* run in a race—?"

"There's the beauty of it," Mus-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

grave said happily. "The wise boys have written him off as a dog. If he's entered in a race you can just about write your own ticket with all the smart money. They'll cover bets at twenty—thirty—fifty to one, if they don't die laughing at you while they're covering your money. Of course not *your* money, sir, but your beards should be able to lay a fortune on him. I've got fourteen of them lined up ready to handle your cash."

"And why," asked Parrish, "should I bet on a horse that has never won and probably never will?"

"Because of a miracle that is still a secret," young Musgrave said. "About ten days ago an exercise boy brought Buster McClure into the barn after he'd raised havoc out on the track in the morning workout. He'd deliberately barreled into one of Mr. Belmont's best stake horses and smashed him into the fence. Belmont's trainer had ridden into old Dan's stable yard and threatened to shoot Buster McClure dead if old Dan ever sent him out on the track again.

"Now there was a kid hanging around the stable pestering Old Dan for a job. His name is Johnny Gow. He's from Texas and they say he grew up breaking quarter horses out there. He's an apprentice rider but nobody has given him a mount yet. Well, when the exercise boy brought in Buster McClure, old Dan went into a rage.

"'You want a job!' he shouted at Johnny Gow, 'then walk that hot!'

"I dare say most of the stable hands in the area stopped to watch. Buster McClure is murder on a green kid. Sure enough, this Johnny Gow hadn't led him halfway around the cooling circle when Buster McClure booted him one in the behind and knocked the boy on his tail. The kid jumped up and faced Buster, which was a dangerous business, believe me. Buster has been known to rear up and slash out at anyone who dared face him.

"Well, this Johnny gave a sharp yank at the halter shank. 'Play tricks on me, will you! I cut my teeth on horses that would make sausage meat out of you. Now you walk quiet or I'll break your neck.'

"Buster McClure stared at the boy, and then, miracle of miracles, he lowered his head and nuzzled affectionately at Johnny Gow.

"The small hairs rose up on old Dan's neck. He watched the boy walk a placid Buster McClure around the cooling circle.

"'Think you could ride him?' Old Dan finally asked Johnny.

"Young Gow laughed. 'Do I look crippled, Mr. Austin? I cut my teeth on horses that would eat this Thoroughbred for breakfast.'

"So the next morning Johnny takes Buster out onto the track. He's a lamb. He does exactly what Johnny asks of him. He runs against the clock so fast that Old Dan's eyes bug out. He's taken to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the saddling enclosure and he behaves there like your kid's Shetland pony. That's the miracle, Mr. Parrish. Sometimes there's a combination of one man and one horse that's just perfect. It seems that Buster McClure will do anything for Johnny Gow.

"Naturally Old Dan has kept this strictly under his hat. He's running him in a prep for the Travers the day after tomorrow. He'll bet every cent he can scrape up on the horse, which will probably be about a hundred dollars. He'll make himself at least a few thousand at the odds."

"And nobody's wise? You're sure of that?"

"That's my job, finding out things for you, sir," Musgrave said, puffing contentedly on his cigar.

"Other clockers—they must have caught Buster McClure in his workouts under this Johnny Gow."

Musgrave smiled dreamily. "They stopped watching him weeks ago, sir. They all know he can run like the wind at six in the morning. They also know he won't run at all in a race in the afternoon."

"But you think he will?"

"Ridden by Johnny Gow he'll be home eating his supper when the second horse finishes."

Parrish's cold eyes narrowed. "I detect a small note of reservation."

Musgrave shrugged. "The boy hasn't had a square meal in weeks. Not only that, he's in love with some tootsie around town. He needs money. Old Dan hasn't got it to give to him. If someone should offer him a good job he would grab it. Without Johnny Gow, Buster McClure is a dog."

"Can we make sure of him?"

"I think so," Musgrave said. "Say I sign him to a contract—act as his agent. We supply him with some ready money—we even lend him some cash to bet on his own horse. We agree, quite casually, to let him ride for Old Dan because Old Dan is counting on him. After the race we tear up his contract. He'll be in the chips—and so will we."

"Fine," Parrish said. "But keep me out of it as usual. You know what will happen if anyone guesses I'm interested in the boy or the horse."

After the arrival of his luggage Parrish undressed, bathed, shaved, then lay down on the mammoth fourposter in his bedroom for a brief period of relaxation. Then he got up and dressed in evening clothes. Twilight was just fading out when we walked across Broadway and down Congress Street to Dick Canfield's red casino. It was not Parrish's intention to gamble, but the restaurant at Canfield's, presided over by a celebrated French chef, was one of the choice eating places of the world—more expensive than Sherry's or Delmonico's in New York, and worth every penny of it.

Ladies were not allowed in Can-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

field's gaming rooms, but they crowded the dining room with their escorts. Parrish saw Billy Coe, Canfield's manager, giving him a curious look as he sauntered across the foyer towards the famous fish pool. The boys were wondering what Parrish's play would be, and he enjoyed watching their eager curiosity. He paused by the fish pool, filled with trout, bass, and other piscatorial delicacies. An excited lady in a low-cut gown had selected a trout for herself and squealed with delight as an attendant scooped it out with a net before her very eyes and placed it in a basket for transportation to the kitchen. Parrish knew that upon its arrival there, the trout would be exchanged for one already cleaned and prepared, and the lady's trout would be slid down a pipe and back into the pool to join his friends.

Parrish went back into the dining room and took a table in the corner where he ordered turtle soup, broiled Maine lobster, and an order of rare roast beef with all the trimmings, including Yorkshire pudding. Parrish never drank, but he ordered a carafe of Saratoga's famous Geyser water.

He was just taking a sip of the mineral water when an excited head waiter began shouting orders at his crew.

"Tell Jean that Miss Russell is coming," he said. "Corn fritters and *crêpes Suzette*, of course, no matter what else she orders."

Parrish smiled. Miss Russell and her escort always ate in a private dining room, but it was no secret that the lady's passion for sweet corn, in all forms, and for Jean's famous *crêpes Suzette* was making her fight against an expanding waistline a losing one.

The turtle soup had just been brought when young Musgrave came over to the table.

"Success?" Parrish asked.

"In the bag," Musgrave said. "I've signed him to a contract. I gave him a hundred dollar advance and fifty dollars to bet on Buster McClure for us. You now have fifteen beards!"

"He won't get drunk or something, will he?"

Musgrave laughed. "He's a dedicated boy, and he's in love. He'll probably splurge by hiring a rig and taking his girl for a moonlight drive. Then in bed by nine thirty!"

"I trust your judgment," Parrish said.

The conversation was ended by a stir of excitement in the dining room as Miss Lillian Russell swept in, ablaze with jewels, followed by Diamond Jim Brady whose evening "set," including shirt studs, cuff links, watch and chain, glasses case, pocketbook clasp, underwear buttons, and belt buckle, was said to be studded with more than 2500 diamonds. The couple passed by Parrish, close enough for him to have touched Miss Russell, and on into the private dining room.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Parrish finished his dinner slowly, enjoying every mouthful. He paid for his check, aware that several of the big shots were watching him from the mahogany bar where General U. S. Grant had once been in the habit of enjoying a man's-size thimbleful. Parrish gave them a thin enigmatic smile as he walked out into the cool, moonlit evening.

At the Grand Union, Parrish commandeered an armchair some distance down the porch from the bandstand. Victor Herbert's fifty-four piece orchestra was playing his familiar tunes under the baton of the maestro himself. One tune was said to have been born right here at Saratoga. Mr. Herbert, the report went, had heard a couple whispering sweet nothings to each other in the gardens back of the hotel, had gone straight to his suite upstairs and written the song that all America was singing—"Kiss Me Again."

Parrish listened, enjoying a post-prandial cigar, and then went upstairs to his own suite. He slept like a baby. At five A.M. he woke without the need of a call. Dressed in a white linen suit he walked briskly out to the track, swinging his malacca cane in a carefree manner.

Fifty or sixty horses were already out, working on the track. Parrish took up a place near the rail on the back stretch and settled down to watch. He instantly identified a score of other spectators spotted along the rail, most of them clockers for the big bookmakers.

A big red-chestnut colt went storming by Parrish's post, a small blond boy perched forward on his neck. Even a greenhorn would have sensed the power, drive, and smoothness of that magnificent horse. Parrish frowned, because he knew from the exercise boy's colors that this must be Buster McClure and Johnny Gow. The big red horse was much too good to be overlooked by the clockers.

Parrish edged his way down the rail until he was standing next to Tippy Cohane, the veteran clocker for the book of "Fashion Plate" Jones.

Johnny Gow was riding hard when they came around for the second time. Parrish heard Tippy Cohane's watch click.

"Fine-looking animal," Parrish said.

Tippy turned his head. "Oh, hello, Mr. Parrish. You mean the chestnut?"

"Yes."

Tippy laughed. "I ought to build him up for you, Mr. Parrish. My boss would give me a bonus if I could persuade you to lay your money on Buster McClure."

"How did you clock him for the mile?"

"So fast it would make your mouth water," Tippy said. "But knowing you, Mr. Parrish, there's no use my kidding you. Besides, you wouldn't take my word alone. That big red one is an outlaw. He

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

may run like the wind out here in the morning, but he won't race. You could name your own price on him with 'Fashion Plate,' and it would be like taking candy from a baby."

"There could always be a day."

Tippy grinned. "He's forty-to-one in the morning line any day he runs. 'Fashion Plate' will take all you want to put down."

"I don't bet on long shots," Parrish said with an elaborate sigh. "You know that."

"I know," Tippy said. "I wish you did."

Parrish wandered back through the stable area to the lunch counter set up there for the working hands and the early-morning onlookers. He ordered a black coffee and sat down at a small table near the window. The first cigar of the day was always special, and Parrish was in the mood to enjoy it. Musgrave was right. The smart money had written off Buster McClure—they were ripe for the kill.

Parrish had just ordered his second cup of coffee when an old man in overalls came in, bought coffee and doughnuts at the counter, then looked around for a place to sit. He was Old Dan Austin, owner and trainer of Buster McClure.

"Share my table with me, Mr. Austin," Parrish called out.

The old man came over and put his breakfast down on the table. "You're Vinny Parrish, ain't you?" he said.

No one had called Parrish by that abbreviation since he was twelve years old.

"Knew your father," Austin said. "Dr. Parrish. Fine man. Knew horses. Understand you do pretty well at the books. Have to know something to be a consistent winner."

"If I didn't have my ear to the ground I'd be betting on your horse tomorrow afternoon," Parrish said. "He looked a winner out there this morning."

The old man's watery blue eyes narrowed. "Buster? He's a heartbreaker. You'd lose your money."

"So everyone tells me. But you think enough of him to keep feeding him."

The old man's lips trembled. "Sentiment," he said. "Dang-fool sentiment."

Parrish nodded. "I know how it is," he said. "Each time out you hope for a miracle."

The old man raised his coffee cup unsteadily. "He's an outlaw," he said. "Just won't run in a race."

It was pathetically transparent. The old man knew he was going to win tomorrow. A hundred dollars at 40-1 would make him four thousand. He didn't want anyone spoiling the odds.

"Just the same, I like sentiment," Parrish said. "Tell you what I'll do, Mr. Austin. I'll lend you five hundred to bet on Buster McClure for yourself, and I'll give you another five hundred to bet on him for me—in your name, of course."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

You could see the wheels going round in the old man's head. Five hundred at 40-1—twenty thousand! New equipment, new tack, maybe even a new horse or two!

"You—you'd be throwing your money away, Vinny," the old man said.

"Let's say I'm just doing it because you remembered what my nickname was thirty years ago." Parrish took out his money clip and peeled off ten one-hundred-dollar bills.

Old Dan's fingers shook so hard that he could scarcely pick up the money. "I—I'll do it, Vinny. Only don't mention it to no one. They might think you were really onto something and that would bring down the odds."

"Mum's the word," Parrish said.

He got up and walked contentedly out into the bright morning sunshine. He now had sixteen beards working for him.

Personal discipline was one of the keys to Parrish's success. He slept well that night. He did not hurry to the track the next day.

Buster McClure was to go in the third race. The average better would have been out at the paddock to watch the big red colt being saddled. Parrish stayed away, despite his interest. He took his place in a box in the clubhouse. No one would even guess until it was over that the third race was to be the means of Parrish's latest killing.

A faint tickle of excitement ran along his spine as the bugle sounded to call the horses to the track for the third race. Sixteen beards had placed bets for Parrish, most of them at 40-to-1, a few as low as 30-to-1. He stood to make about $150,000 on a $4000 investment. J. P. Morgan couldn't hope to do half as well on Wall Street.

The horses came out on the track, preceded by a red-coated marshal on a spotted pony. Buster McClure, fourth in line, was walking quiet as a lamb. Figuratively Parrish hugged himself. In a few minutes he would have outsmarted the smart money—and in spades.

A man with a megaphone was announcing something from the Judges' stand which Parrish couldn't hear. He turned to his nearest neighbor to inquire.

"I didn't get it," the man replied. "Maybe a scratch."

Well, Buster McClure wasn't scratched. He was moving into a starting position with the calm confidence of a champion. Somewhere in the distance Parrish thought he heard his name called. He turned his head and spied Wilson Musgrave, separated from him by hundreds of people.

Musgrave was waving his arms wildly. Even at that distance Parrish could see that the young man's face was the color of ashes.

Parrish frowned and looked out at the track again. Had something gone wrong? The horses were in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

position behind the starting tape, some rearing and plunging, but Buster McClure stood calm and ready.

And then they were off!

The big red colt was magnificent. He moved like a powerful and well oiled machine. He was on the outside, but before the other horses had taken a dozen strides Buster McClure had opened daylight and was running a good two lengths ahead of the field. And as they rounded the first turn the big red colt was opening more and more daylight. It was going to be a walkover.

Parrish settled back in his seat, a thin smile of satisfaction on his lips.

The horses were pounding towards the back stretch, Buster a good five lengths in front. But Buster McClure never made the turn into the back stretch. Instead, under a full head of steam, he went over the outside rail like a champion jumper at Aintree and headed straight for his stable.

There was a roar of laughter and excitement from the crowd. Old Dan Austin's outlaw had done it again!

Parrish sat without moving. He wasn't aware that Musgrave had reached him until he felt someone shaking him by the arm. There was cold fury in Parrish's eyes when he turned to look at his aide.

"You heard?" Musgrave asked in a hollow voice.

"I saw!" Parrish said. His right hand was white from gripping the head of his malacca stick.

"The boy—he didn't show up," Musgrave said. "At the last minute Old Dan had to put someone else up on the horse. It was too late to do anything about it, sir."

"I thought the boy—Johnny Gow—was in the bag."

"He was, sir, he was! I just don't understand it. I—"

Parrish stood up. "We've been sold out by a fresh kid," he said. "That boy is going to be taught a lesson, Musgrave. Let's find him."

They edged their way through the crowd, passing behind the box occupied by Diamond Jim and his lovely lady. There was much excitement there—apparently Miss Russell didn't know how lucky she'd been, Parrish thought bitterly. However, Johnny Gow would soon discover the cost of double-crossing J. Vincent Parrish.

They had finally got out into the open area back of the stands when someone called out Musgrave's name. It was a man named Cavers, who was a special cop at the track.

"Been looking for you, Mr. Musgrave," he said. "Nice afternoon, Mr. Parrish."

"That is a matter of opinion," Parrish said grimly.

"There's a kid named Johnny Gow," Cavers went on. "He says he's under contract to you as a rider, Mr. Musgrave."

"Where is he?" Parrish asked in a frozen voice.

"In jail, sir. Been there since last

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

night. He needs money to pay a fine, I guess."

"Since last night!" Musgrave said. "Why didn't he get in touch with me?"

Cavers grinned. "It's kind of a funny story, sir," he said.

"I dare you to make me laugh," Parrish growled.

"It may not be hard," Cavers said. "It's like this, sir. You know Miss Lillian Russell?"

"To hell," Parrish said precisely, "with Miss Lillian Russell. Why is Johnny Gow in jail and why didn't he get word to Musgrave until now?"

"He couldn't, sir. They wouldn't let him. It's like this. It seems Miss Russell is having trouble with her weight. Each night before dinner she grabs hold of the bedpost in her bedroom and hangs on while her maid tries to lace Miss Russell into her corset. It seems that on hot summer nights she often doesn't pull down the shades. Well, word kind of got around, I guess. A whole crowd of young blades has been collecting under that window every night to watch Miss Russell being laced in. Mr. Brady got word of it, and last night half a dozen cops were waiting and arrested eleven of 'em."

"Johnny Gow was one of them?" Musgrave asked.

"A peeping Tom!" Parrish snorted.

"Funny thing about that," Cavers said.

"There's not a damn thing funny about it," Parrish said. "Why did he wait till today to try to reach Musgrave?"

"Couldn't help himself," Cavers said. "Brady wanted all of 'em prosecuted. But three or four of 'em were from the best families in Saratoga. Expensive lawyers got in the act. They've been since last night trying to keep the thing from becoming a public scandal. Finally, around noon today, the lawyers made a deal. A large fine was set. They were all able to pay except this Johnny Gow."

"Let him rot there!" Parrish said.

Cavers was laughing. "The funny thing is, Johnny Gow wasn't there to look at Miss Russell at all."

"Just standing on a street corner minding his own business?" Parrish asked sarcastically.

"No, sir. It seems the maid who laces up Miss Russell is Johnny Gow's girl. He was just waiting for her to get through for the night. He'd hired a rig to take her for a moonlight drive. Never even looked at Miss Russell, he claims. Wouldn't have been gentlemanly."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDITORS' FILE CARD

AUTHOR:	**TALMAGE POWELL**
TITLE:	***Somebody Cares***
TYPE:	Detective Story
DETECTIVES:	Odus Martin and Jenks
LOCALE:	United States
TIME:	The Present
COMMENTS:	*The case of Mary Smith, alias Jane Doe, mugged, robbed, and murdered in Hibernia Park . . . but "there are no total strangers in this world. Somebody cares."*

BEING TEAMED WITH ODUS MARTIN wasn't an inviting prospect, but I didn't intend to let it blight the pleasure of my promotion to plainclothes.

His own reaction was buried deep in his personal privacy. I, the greenie fresh out of uniform, was accepted as just another chore. Martin volunteered no helpful advice; neither did he pass judgment on me. I suspected that he would be slow to praise and reluctant to criticize.

If my partner's almost inhuman taciturnity made him a poor companion, I had compensations. A ripple of pleasure raced through me each time I entered the squad room. To me it was not a barren bleak place of scarred desks, hard chairs, dingy walls, and stale tobacco.

My first days as Martin's partner were busy ones. We rounded up suspects in a knifing case. Martin questioned them methodically and dispassionately. He decided a man named Greene was lying. He had Greene brought back and after seven hours and fifteen minutes of additional questioning by Martin, Greene signed a statement attesting his guilt.

Martin's attitude irritated me. A man's life had been cut short with a knife. Another man would spend his best years behind bars. Wives, mothers, children, brothers, sisters were affected. Their lives would

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

never again be quite the same, no matter how strong they were or how much they managed to forget.

But to Odus Martin it was all a chore, nothing more. A small chore at that, one of many in an endless chain.

When I mentioned the families, Martin looked at me as if I were a truant and not too bright schoolboy. "Everybody in this world has someone," he said. "Accept that—and quit worrying about it."

"I'm not necessarily worrying," I said, an edge creeping into my voice.

He shrugged and bent over some paper work on his desk. His manner was a dismissal—a reduction of me to a neuter, meaningless zero.

"Since you put it that way," I said argumentatively, "how about the nameless tramp the county has to bury?"

He looked up at me slowly. "Somewhere, Jenks, somebody misses that tramp. You take my word for it. There are no total strangers in this world. Somebody cares—somebody always cares."

I hadn't expected this bit of philosophy from him. It caused me to give him a second glance. But he still reminded me of a slab of silvery-gray casting in iron.

As the weeks passed, I learned to get along with Martin. I adopted a cool manner toward him, but only as a protective device. I told myself I'd never let a quarter of a century of violence and criminals turn me into an unsmiling robot, as had happened to Odus Martin.

I paid him the respect due a first-rate detective. His movements, mental as well as physical, were slow, thorough, and objective. He made colorless—hence, uninteresting—newspaper copy. This, coupled with his close-mouthed habits, caused most reporters to dislike him. Martin didn't mind in the least.

But when it came to criminals he had the instincts of a stalking leopard. As I became better acquainted with him, I realized these were not natural endowments—they were the cumulative conditioning and results of twenty-five years. He seemed never to have forgotten the smallest trick that experience had taught him.

The day Greene was arraigned, I put a question to Martin that had been bothering me. "You decided Greene was lying when he told us his alibi. Why? How could you be sure?"

"He looked me straight and forthrightly in the eye with every word he spoke," Martin explained.

This drew a complete blank with me.

Martin glanced at me and said patiently, "Greene *normally* was a very shifty-eyed character."

Well, I knew I could learn a lot from this guy, if I were sufficiently perceptive and alert myself. He didn't regard it as his place to teach. He was a cop.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As usual, I was fifteen minutes early to work the morning after the murder of Mary Smith. Martin was coming from the squad room when I arrived. He was moving with the slow-motion, elephantine gait that covered distance like a mild sprint. It was clear he'd just got in and had intended to leave without waiting for me.

I fell in step beside him. "What's up?"

"Girl been killed."

"Where?"

"In Hibernia Park."

She lay as if sleeping under some bushes where she'd been dragged and hurriedly and ineffectually hidden. It was a golden day, filled with the freshness of morning, the grass and trees of the park dewy and vividly green.

Squad cars and uniformed men had already cordoned off the area. Men from the lab reached the scene about the same time as Martin and I. Efficiently, they started the routine of photography and footprint moulage.

I had not, as yet, the objectivity of the rest of them. The girl drew and held my attention. She was small, fine of bone, and sparsely fleshed. Her face had a piquant quality. She might have been almost pretty, if she'd known how to fix herself up.

As it was, she lay drab and colorless in her cheap, faded cotton dress, dull brown hair framing her face.

Her attitude of sleep, face toward the sky, became a horror when my eyes followed the lines her dragging heels had made. The lines ended beyond a flat stone. The stone was crusted with dark, dried blood. It was obvious that she'd been knocked down there, as she came along the walkway. The back of her head had struck the stone. Perhaps she'd died instantly. Her assailant had dragged her quickly to the bushes, concealing the body long enough for him to get far away from the park.

Looking again at her, I shivered slightly. What in your nineteen or twenty years, I asked silently of her, brought you to this?

The murder scene yielded little. Her purse, if she'd had one, was gone. She wore no jewelry, although she might have had a cheap watch or ID bracelet. The golden catch from such an item was found near the flat stone by one of the lab men.

Later in the squad room, Martin and I sat and looked at the golden clasp.

"Mugged, robbed, murdered," Martin decided. "I wonder how much she was carrying in her purse. Five dollars? Ten?"

He held the catch so that it caught the light. "We'll check the pawnshops. A hoodlum this cheap will try to pawn the watch. Nothing from Missing Persons?"

I'd just finished the routine in that department. I shook my head.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Nothing from the lab, either," Martin said. "Her clothes came from any bargain basement. No laundry marks. Washed them herself. No scars or identifying marks. No bridgework in the mouth. We'll run the fingerprints, but I'm not hopeful. The P.M. will establish the cause of death as resulting from compound fracture of the skull, probably late last night."

"None of it will tell us who she is," I said.

"That's what I'm saying. But somebody will turn up, asking for her. Somebody will claim her. Girl that young—she can't die violently and disappear without it affecting someone. Meantime, all we got is this clasp."

We took it to all the pawnshops in the city. No watch with such a clasp missing had been pawned.

Martin next picked up every punk who had a mugging or mugging attempt on his record. We questioned each one of them. The task ate up two days, and when it was over we had placed nobody near Hibernia Park at the right time.

The girl's body remained in the morgue. No one inquired about her. She wasn't reported missing. She continued to be an unclaimed Jane Doe.

"It means," Martin said, "that she has no family here. She must have come here to work, maybe from a farm upstate. Lucky for us that we live in a reasonably small city. We'll check all the rooming houses—places where such a girl might have lived."

We did it building by building, block by teeming block, from landlord to landlady to building super.

Martin would take one side of the street, I the other. Our equipment was a picture of the girl, and the question was always the same. So were all the answers.

We spent two fatiguing, monotonous days of this. Then about midafternoon the third day, I came disconsolately from a cheaper apartment building and saw Martin waving to me from a long porch across the street.

I waited for a break in traffic and crossed over. The rooming house was an old gables-and-gingerbread monstrosity, three stories, a mansion in its day, but long since chopped into small apartments and sleeping rooms.

A small, gray, near-sighted woman hovered in the hallway behind Odus Martin.

"This is Mrs. Carraway," Martin said.

The landlady and I nodded our new acquaintance.

"May we see Mary Smith's room?" Martin asked.

Mary Smith, I thought. I'd begun to think you'd remain Jane Doe forever, Mary Smith.

"Since you're police officers I guess it's all right," Mrs. Carraway said.

"You've seen my credentials,"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Martin said. "We'll take full responsibility."

We followed Mrs. Carraway to a small clean room at the end of the hallway. She stood in the open doorway while we examined the room.

The furnishings were typical—mismatched bed, bureau, chest of drawers, and worn carpet, faded curtains.

A neat person, Mary Smith. The few items of clothing she'd owned were pressed and properly placed in the closet and chest of drawers.

The room reflected a lonely life. There were no photos, no letters. Nothing of a personal nature except the clothing and a few magazines on a bedside table.

"How long she lived with you?" Martin asked.

"A little over two months," Mrs. Carraway said in her cautious, impersonal voice.

"When did you see her last?"

"A week ago Thursday when she paid a month's rent."

"She have any callers?"

"Callers?"

"Boy friend, perhaps."

"Not that I know of." Mrs. Carraway pursed her lips. "I'm not a nosy landlady. She seemed like a quiet, nice girl. So long as they pay their rent and don't raise a disturbance—that's all I'm concerned with."

"Know where she came from?"

"No. She came and looked at the room and said she'd take it. She said she was employed. I checked, to make sure."

"Where was that?"

"At the Cloverleaf Restaurant. She's a waitress."

Martin thanked her, and we started from the room.

Mrs. Carraway said, "Is she in serious trouble?"

"Pretty much," Martin said. "I'm sure she won't be coming back."

"What'll I do with her things?"

"We'll let you know."

Mrs. Carraway followed us to the front door. "I've told you everything I know. I'm not an unkind person. But whatever she's done is none of my business. You'd just be wasting my time to be calling me in as a witness."

"We'll trouble you no more than we have to," Martin said.

We returned to the unmarked police car parked in the middle of the block. Martin got behind the wheel and drove in silence.

"Any doubt of her identity?" I asked.

"I don't think so. We'll check fingerprints in the room against the Jane Doe to be sure. But the landlady showed no hesitation when she saw the picture. She was Mary Smith, right enough."

Hello, Mary Smith, I thought. Hello, stranger. Who were you?

A man named Blakeslee was the owner of the Cloverleaf, a large drive-in on the south side of town. He was a slender, dark, harried-looking fellow, about forty.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He was checking the cash register when we arrived. We showed him our credentials, and with a gesture of annoyance he led us to a small office off the kitchen.

"Well," he said, closing the door, "what's this all about?"

"Got a Mary Smith on your payroll?" Martin asked.

"I did have. She quit without notice. A lot of them do. You've no idea what it is to keep help nowadays."

"What were the circumstances?"

"Circumstances?" He shrugged. "She didn't show up for a couple of days, so I put another girl on. There weren't any circumstances, as you put it."

"Did you wonder if maybe she was sick?"

"I figured she'd have called in. She's not the first to quit like that. I haven't time to be running around checking on them. What's your interest in her?"

"She's dead."

"What's that?" After his initial start, Blakeslee raised his hand and stroked his chin. "Why, that's too bad," he said in a tone without real meaning.

"The papers carried a story," Martin said. "Unidentified girl murdered."

"I don't recall seeing it. Probably wouldn't have connected it with Mary Smith anyway. How did it happen?"

"She was apparently on her way home. We think she was knocked down for whatever of value she was carrying."

"It couldn't have been much."

"Can you tell us anything about her?"

"Only that she came to work here. She seemed nice enough, always on time. Too quiet to make many friends."

"Where did she work formerly?"

"She came here from Crossmore." Blakeslee spread his hands. "I wish I could help. But after all, what was she to me?"

Martin and I took the expressway out of town. The drive to Crossmore, a small town in the next county, required only forty minutes.

I wondered how many restaurants there were in Crossmore. Very few, I guessed. We had at least that much in our favor.

However, Martin drove right on through the village.

"I'm playing a hunch," he said.

Just beyond Crossmore, overlooking the busy highway, were the rolling hills and meadows and buildings of the country-supported orphanage.

Martin turned into a winding driveway which was shaded by tall pines. He stopped before an old colonial-type home that had been converted into an administration building. More recent structures of frame and brick housed dorms and classrooms. Beyond there were barns and workshops.

A few minutes later we were in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the office of Dr. Spreckles, the superintendent. A wiry, sandy man, Spreckles struck me as being a pleasant individual who nevertheless knew how to run things.

He looked at the picture of Mary Smith that the lab boys had made.

"Yes," he said. "She was one of our girls." His lips tightened slightly. "We hope she has done nothing to reflect on the training she received here."

"She hasn't," Martin assured him. "Who were her people?"

Spreckles went behind his desk and sat down. "She had none. She was born out of wedlock in the county hospital to a woman who gave her name only as Mary Smith. As soon as she was able to get about, the mother abandoned the child."

"The girl grew up here?"

"Yes."

"Never adopted?"

"No," Spreckles said slowly, resting his elbows on his desk and steepling his fingers. "As a child, she was quite awkward, too quiet, too shy. She lived here until she was eighteen."

"Who were her friends?"

"Strangely enough," Spreckles frowned, "I can't say. I don't think she had any really close ones. She was a face in a crowd, you might say. Never precocious. Not at the bottom of her classes, you understand, but not at the top. I do wish you'd tell me what difficulty she's in."

"She's dead," Martin said. "A mugger killed her during a robbery attempt."

"How terrible!" Spreckles made an honest attempt to muster genuine grief, but he simply didn't have it. He was shocked and upset by the passing forever of an impersonal image, but that was all . . .

As we drove back through Crossmore, Martin broke his silence—with a single utterance. It was softly spoken but the most vicious oath I'd ever heard. It was so unlike Martin that I stared at him out of the corner of my eyes.

But I let the silence return and stay that way. Right then, he had the look about him of a heavy-chested, steel-gray tomcat whose wounds have been rubbed with turpentine and salt.

We returned to grinding routine. The pawnshops. Still no watch. The vicinity of Hibernia Park—questioning all the people, one by one, who lived in the area. No one had glimpsed a man coming from the park about the time she was killed.

At night I was too tired to sleep. I wondered what this was getting us, if we'd ever catch the man. Yet there wasn't the slightest letdown in Martin's determination. I only wished I shared it . . .

Martin and I returned to the squad room late Wednesday afternoon. A few minutes afterward, a uniformed policeman walked in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and handed Martin an inexpensive woman's watch.

My scalp pulled tight. I crossed to Martin's desk as he opened a drawer. He shook the golden clasp from a small manila envelope. The clasp matched the broken band of the watch perfectly.

Martin stood up. His nostrils were flaring. "Where'd this come from?"

"The personal effects of a guy named Biddix," the man in uniform said. "He was in a poker game we just broke up in an old loft. The desk sergeant said you'd want to see the watch."

Martin's big hand closed over the tiny timepiece. I followed him out of the office.

Biddix was a dried-up, seedy little fellow in his late sixties. He'd been separated from the other poker players and put in a solitary cell.

When the cell door opened, Biddix took one look at Martin's face and backed against the wall.

Martin held out his hand and opened it. "Where'd you get this?"

"Look . . ." Biddix swallowed. "If it's stolen, I swear I had nothing to do with it."

"It was torn from a murdered girl's wrist," Martin said.

The dead-gray of Biddix's beard stubble suddenly blended exactly with the color of his skin.

"A guy put the watch in the game," Biddix said. "And that's the truth, so help me!"

"Which one?"

"He left before we was raided."

"What's his name?"

"Edgar Collins."

"Know where he lives?"

"Sure. In a flop on East Maple Street, number 311."

We went out. The cell door clanged behind us. Biddix came over and stood holding the bars. "I didn't know anything about the watch."

"Sure," Martin said.

"You'll put me in with the others now, won't you?"

"No," Martin said. "Not yet."

We got the location of Edgar Collins' room from the building super, went up one flight, and eased to the door.

The house was hot and the hallway smelled of age and many people. We listened. After a little, we heard a bedspring creak.

We put our shoulders to the door, and it flew open. A stringy, big-boned, bald-headed man sprang off the bed and dropped the tabloid he'd been reading. He was tall and stooped. He wore dirty khaki pants and a dirty undershirt.

"What's the big idear?" he demanded.

"Your name Edgar Collins?" Martin asked.

"So what if it is?"

"We're police officers. We want to talk to you."

"Yeah? What about?"

"A girl who was killed in Hiber-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nia Park. If you're innocent, you got nothing to worry about. If not . . . We've got a shoe-track moulage to start. We'll find plenty of other things with the help of the lab boys, once we know where to start looking."

Collins stared at us. An explosion took place behind his pale eyes. He lunged toward the open window.

Martin got between me and Collins and grabbed the man first. He dragged Collins back in the room. Collins threw punches at Martin in blind panic.

Martin hit him three times in the face. Collins fell on the floor, wrapped his arms about his head, and began rolling back and forth.

"I didn't mean it," he said, babbling. "She fell on the stone. She was a stranger, nothing to me. It was an accident . . . please . . . give me a break! I didn't mean it, I tell you."

For a moment I thought Odus Martin was going to start hitting the man again.

A volunteer minister performed graveside rites the next morning. Martin and I stood with our hats in our hands.

I looked at the casket and thought: Goodbye, Mary Smith—that name will do as well as any. No father, no mother, no one. Killed by a man who never saw you before.

The sun was shining, but the day felt bleak and dismal.

Then, as we returned to headquarters, it came to me that Odus Martin had been right. There are no absolute strangers in this world, no zeros.

The death of Mary Smith had affected Odus Martin. Because I was his partner, it had affected me. Through us, it seemed to me, the human race had recognized the importance of her and expressed its unwillingness to let her die as an animal dies.

Mary Smith had lived and died in loneliness, but she had not been alone.

I didn't say anything of this to Odus Martin. He was a hard man to talk to. Anyhow, I felt that he understood it already, probably much more deeply than I ever could.

TO HELP IMPROVE YOUR CHRISTMAS MAIL SERVICE
WRAP PACKAGES SECURELY
ADDRESS LEGIBLY—INCLUDE POSTAL ZONE NUMBER
AND YOUR RETURN ADDRESS
SHOP AND MAIL EARLY
To Out-of-Town Points, by December 10th
For Local Delivery, by December 15th

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

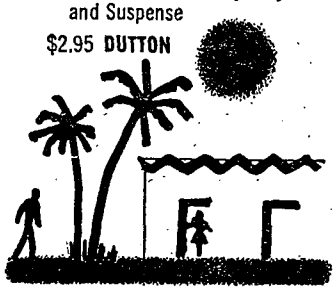
A teen age siren plunges an innocent man into a whirlpool of crime—and MURDER in

LIONEL WHITE'S

OBSESSION

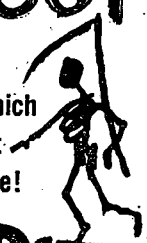
A Dutton Novel of Mystery and Suspense

$2.95 DUTTON



REX STOUT

One of his finest full-length mysteries—which means one of the great works in the whole genre!



GAMBIT

a Nero Wolfe novel

$2.95 • VIKING

HAVE YOU READ

"SERGEANT CUFF GOES FISHING"

by Gil North

$3.25 THE BRITISH BOOK CENTRE

Available at

Dept. EQ5, 122 E. 55th St. New York 22, N.Y.

CLASSIFIED

Rates $1.00 per Word

RARE BOOKS

Out of print mysteries? Our Specialty. Aardvarks Book Detectives, Box 668, San Diego 12, California.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

ASSEMBLE Artificial Lures at Home for stores. Material supplied Free. Profitable! Write: Lures, Ft. Walton Beach, Fla.

Worship together this week

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BEST MYSTERIES OF THE MONTH

recommended by ANTHONY BOUCHER

The paperback reprint picture has changed completely in the past few years, as more and more of the significant classics of crime and detection become available in new editions. In addition to the splendid lines of Dolphin and Collier and the special contributions of Ace (now offering Elisabeth Sanxay Holding) and Berkley (with Elizabeth Daly), we now have a new quality series from Scribner's, starting off with S. S. Van Dine's THE GREENE MURDER CASE (1928; SL71, $1.65) for students of detective history, and Edgar Lustgarten's ONE MORE UNFORTUNATE (1947; SL70, $1.25) and Dorothy Salisbury Davis' A GENTLE MURDERER (1951; SL69, $1.25) for admirers of the five-star suspense novel at its most literate and compelling.

★★★★ **THE PALE HORSE, *by Agatha Christie*** (Dodd, Mead, $3.75)
The Past Mistress of us all once more brilliantly bamboozles the reader, this time with an eery plot of murder-by-black-magic.

★★★★ **THE CHINESE NAIL MURDERS, *by Robert van Gulik*** (Harper & Row, $3.95)
"Judge Dee's last 3 cases," historically speaking; but it's unthinkable that van Gulik should stop chronicling these exotic marvels.

★★★★ **THE PLAIN MAN, *by Julian Symons*** (Harper & Row, $3.50)
The leading exponent of "the modern crime novel" turns back to the straight whodunit, bringing to it all his insight and intelligence.

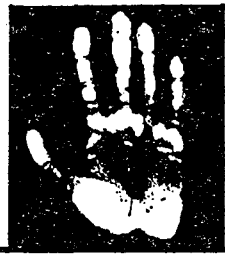
★★★ **BLIND GIRL'S BUFF, *by Evelyn Berckman*** (Dodd, Mead, $3.50)
No murder but powerful suspense in subtle story of a 17-year-old girl's perilous quest for her identity.

★★★ **THE FUGITIVE, *by Robert L. Fish*** (Simon & Schuster's, $3.50)
EQMM's favorite parodist turns to the straight adventure thriller (locale: Rio) in the best American "first" so far in 1962.

EQMM readers should need no steering to the latest Queen anthologies: TO BE READ BEFORE MIDNIGHT (Random, $4.95), the 17th EQMM annual with 21 distinguished new stories 1960-1962, and ELLERY QUEEN'S 1963 ANTHOLOGY (Davis, $1), the 4th of E.Q.'s excellent bargain counters, with 19 stories new and old from EQMM 1943-1956, including 3 fine long novelets.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

50 BEST-SELLING MYSTERIES



NOW ONLY $5.95

IF MYSTERY IS YOUR OYSTER, FEAST ON 50 BEST SELLERS!

- ● 1263 The Wicked Woman, Lee Wright
- ● 2821 The Drowning Pool, John Ross MacDonald
- ● 6011 The New Adventures of Ellery Queen, Ellery Queen
- ● 6013 The Black Gold Murders, John B. Ethan
- ● 6017 The Egyptian Cross Mystery, Ellery Queen
- ● 6021 The Way Some People Die, John Ross MacDonald
- ● 6062 You Can Die Laughing, A. A. Fair
- ● 6078 The Asphalt Jungle, W. R. Burnett
- ● 6087 Black Is The Fashion For Dying, Jonathan Latimer
- ● 6094 Murder on Wall Street, John B. Ethan
- ● 6111 Murder After A Fashion, Spencer Dean
- ● 6114 Murder With Mirrors, Agatha Christie
- ● 6122 Invitation To Vengeance, Kathleen Moore Knight
- ● 6125 The Mystery of the Blue Train, Agatha Christie
- ● 6130 The Chinese Orange Mystery, Ellery Queen
- ● 6132 Minute Mysteries, Austin Ripley
- ● 6133 Halfway House, Ellery Queen
- ● 6134 The Roman Hat Mystery, Ellery Queen
- ● C • 343 The Finishing Stroke, Ellery Queen
- ● C • 344 The Lady In The Lake, Raymond Chandler
- ● C • 375 Playback, Raymond Chandler
- ● C • 395 Murder In The Calais Coach, Agatha Christie
- ● C • 420 Dead Man's Folly, Agatha Christie
- ● C • 421 Funerals Are Fatal, Agatha Christie
- ● C • 422 Hickory Dickory Death, Agatha Christie
- ● C • 426 Too Many Ghosts, Paul Gallico
- ● M • 4164 Big City Crimes, Harold R. Danforth and James D. Horan
- ● M • 4198 The Dain Curse, Dashiell Hammett
- ● M • 4199 The Glass Key, Dashiell Hammett
- ● M • 4202 The Thin Man, Dashiell Hammett
- ● M • 4217 Double Jeopardy, Edwin Lanham
- ● M • 4222 Wanton For Murder, Henry Klinger
- ● M • 4228 Pretty Miss Murder, W. T. Ballard
- ● M • 4233 With A Madman Behind Me, Talmage Powell
- ● M • 4243 Sleep With Slander, Dolores Hitchens
- ● 2246 The Lady In The Morgue, Jonathan Latimer
- ● GC • 94 A Matter Of Conviction, Evan Hunter
- ● M • 4176 Deadly To Bed, Don Tracy
- ● M • 4169 The Secret Ways, Alistair MacLean
- ● M • 4088 Dracula, Bram Stoker
- ● C • 396 They Came To Bagdad, Agatha Christie
- ● 1252 Cairo Intrigue, William Manchester
- ● 6031 The Girl's Number Doesn't Answer, Talmage Powell
- ● 6075 Killer On The Turnpike, William P. McGivern
- ● 6030 Marked For Murder, John Ross MacDonald
- ● 6052 Cat Among The Pigeons, Agatha Christie
- ● 6029 Call Girls For Murder, John B. Ethan
- ● 6064 The Hollywood Hoax, Robert Caine Frazer
- ● 6041 Never Dies The Dream, Margaret Landon
- ● 6024 Beware The Curves, A. A. Fair

OFFER GOOD UNTIL APR. 1, 1963

The publisher reserves the right to substitute when listed titles are out of print.

December 1962

MYSTERY POCKET CLUB
230 West 17th Street (8th floor)
New York 11, N. Y.

I enclose_____($5.95 for each set of 50 books) which will be sent to me prepaid. (Please send check or money order.) I understand that if I am not completely satisfied, I may return my books within 14 days for a complete refund.

NAME_____

STREET_____

CITY_____ZONE_____

STATE_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DEPARTMENT OF "FIRST STORIES"

This is the 242nd "first story" to be published by Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine . . . a story with an unusual background—the theatrical world of Off-Broadway—with its hopes, herculean labors, skimpy meals, frustrations, agonies, intrigues, despairs . . .

The author was a student at Northwestern University, a free-lance writer in Chicago and Hollywood (promotional writing, chiefly for hotels and theaters); he also wrote copy and promotional material for the U.S. Army and for "Stars and Stripes."

The title—"Tear a Passion to Tatters"—comes from Act 3, Scene II, of HAMLET: *"O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise . . . pray you, avoid it."*

TEAR A PASSION TO TATTERS

by RALEIGH BOND

WHEN THE DOOR WAS OPENED, the incoming wind roused the sleeping tramp at the bar. Slowly his eyes blinked at the aristocratic-looking lady sitting on the bench, having her wet boots removed by the coachman.

"Marie?"

She started at the sound of his voice and peered through the grayish air of the inn. The tramp had risen and was walking toward her in disbelief.

"I beg your pardon?" Her tone was haughty but there was a faint tinge of fear.

"Marie?" he repeated softly, and then he grew louder, more certain. "Marie . . . It *is* you!"

She rose suddenly, wrenching the boot from the bewildered coachman. "Get away from me."

"Marie, please . . . look at me." He was advancing on her, backing her to the wall. Tears streamed down his cheeks. "Don't turn away. It's me, Ivan. Please, Marie."

"Denis," she called to the coachman, "don't just stand there!"

The coachman made a timid pass at the man with his riding crop. This seemed to ignite a fire in the tramp. He took hold of the coachman and hurled him to the floor. Then his hand clamped down on the woman's wrist, his mouth twisting ferociously.

"Can't you *look* at me? Did you

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

think I was dead? Did you think I'd ever forget *you?* Are you afraid to look at me? Is that it, Marie? Are you afraid?"

The woman stopped struggling. Her eyes went boldly to his. Even though he gripped her hand she seemed the stronger of the two.

"Take your hand off me, you fool."

Suddenly his figure blurred. One hand threw her to the floor while the other seized a huge ax which hung on the wall of the inn. With a snarl he raised it above his head.

"You damn—" He spoke an unforgivable word.

The coachman reached out to pull the woman away—a fraction of a second before the ax crashed down . . .

There was a pause, and then from the darkness came a thickly accented voice. "Hokay. Diss iss not bad."

The houselights of the theater came on as the director, Anton Volchek, rose from his seat and approached the stage. The actors relaxed.

In the dark recesses of lower Manhattan there are scattered a number of renovated garages, church auditoriums, ex-movie houses, and spacious basements which someone has taken the trouble and time to sweep out and label *theaters.* They are located everywhere—next door to the unique Protestant-Jewish house of worship in Greenwich Village, adjacent to a small Bowery establishment that caters to tired bachelors. Collectively they are known as "Off-Broadway," and they mean different things to different people.

To the unemployed actors of New York, the young hopefuls, the untried directors, they represent an opportunity to be discovered, a period in which they can live by their talents instead of by the grace of the unemployment office. To the critics they may mean an interesting column in which they can denounce the sterile opulence of the lavish Broadway shows and become patron saints to unappreciated genius. To the public they offer the spirit of rebellion, a fling of nonconformity, a chance to scoff at the high prices of the Mark Hellinger or the Booth Theater, while sitting in some drafty cellar gazing at a stage about the size of a marionette platform.

To Saul Brooks, Off-Broadway was his last chance.

For a number of years Saul had been that face most of us grew up with, that nameless actor who appeared briefly in movies and television shows as the man behind the counter, the cab driver, or the first murder victim. Earning a moderate and steady living for many years, he was known to other actors as one of the few lucky ones who could maintain a secure income in this crazy business. Lucky? To Saul Brooks it was a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

living hell—because Saul had faith in his acting ability and seemed doomed to receive only minor bits that could never show off his deeper talents.

Early that season he had taken the decisive step. With the money he and his actress wife had saved from television residuals, he announced in *Variety* that he was about to produce a show and that he would play the leading part. There was much shaking of heads among the critics who thought he was foolishly risking a minor career in the vain hope of becoming a star. If he fails, they said, it may set him back ten years.

Realizing this, Saul Brooks went about his task with extreme caution. Five directors were tried before he found Anton Volchek. It wasn't that Volchek was any better. It was just that his rather unimaginative man could do one thing the others couldn't: he could accept Saul's violent insecurity with unfailing patience.

Saul deliberately chose a tried and true Russian play because, in his opinion, critics are always eager to laud Russian plays and thereby display their broad-mindedness in political affairs. The lead role was an actor's dream. He had an impressive entrance, he dominated his supporting players, and in a wild climax he vainly tried to kill his ex-wife with an ax and subsequently wallowed in a five-minute soliloquy of self-pity. To support him, Saul gathered a collection of colorless actors but owing to financial pressures, he was forced to give the female lead to his wife whom he didn't have to pay.

Roberta Brooks was a loving wife. She was one of those big women with a commanding personality who, as soon as they begin to assert themselves, are fawned on by men. She could swear—which gave her a reputation for sophistication; she was open and friendly—which in some minds pointed to nymphomaniac tendencies; and she possessed a magnificently shaped figure—which elevated her to a diety.

Like most independent, self-sufficient women Roberta married a domineering egotist. Their private life together was spent in a secluded apartment uptown where she devoted many hours to massaging his ego and burying his face in her apron whenever the misunderstanding world drove him to tears of rage. In return, he treated her with all the rough domination she craved. If the fates had willed it, they could have lived out their lives in a curious, blissful harmony. But the fates made one mistake: Roberta Brooks had a much greater talent.

"Arr you awl 'right, Roberta?" asked Anton Volchek as Roberta Brooks grasped the hands of the tramp and the coachman, got to her feet, and stared with comic ap-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prehension at the ax on the floor.

"All things considered," she said, and the other actors laughed. She was popular with the company.

"How did it look, Anton?" asked the tramp, Saul Brooks, his face covered with perspiration.

The director raised his hand and made a circle with his thumb and forefinger. "Parfact! Sooo parfact! Iff ve con doo hit dat way tonight ve haff no vorries."

"Thank God," Roberta whispered. They had been rehearsing that one scene since ten o'clock.

The coachman, Bruce Kennedy, turned to the tramp. "Saul, I'd delay bringing down that ax a fraction more."

"Why? Did it look bad?"

"It looked fine, but I just got Roberta out from under in time."

"Maybe we'd better take it again," Saul Brooks said. The rest of the cast groaned.

"No, no," Bruce said quickly. "I only meant that you'll have to be a little more careful—just in case I fumble it a bit. You were the one who insisted on using the real ax."

"I insisted on that because it would look phoney with anything else." He snapped at Volchek. "One more time."

"Saul darling," Roberta spoke soothingly and patiently. "It's all right. Bruce worries too much, but if anything went wrong I know I can depend on him."

"Meaning you can't depend on *me?*"

Roberta sighed while the cast tactfully regarded the floor. "I didn't say that."

"You're kind of sloppy on your own cues, you know. This scene is crucial, and if anything goes wrong—"

"Saul, it's sweet of you to worry about me so, but we'd done it a dozen times now."

"Every first-string critic in town will be here tonight and all we need is for this scene to look phoney and get a laugh. They'd just love that." He suddenly crossed to her and his voice flared up. "Well, I'm not going before them with a slipshod performance! We've only got one chance and I want it to be perfect! You should too."

"Awl right. Awl right." Anton raised his hands and spoke quickly. "Ve take hit vonce morr."

They took it twice more, at Saul's insistence, and then they broke for supper.

A half hour before show time the cast reported in. The large spacious room upstairs had once been a bedroom for three, when the theater had been a transient hotel. Now it was Saul's and Roberta's dressing room. Downstairs there was a small hallway separated from the orchestra section by a thin partition. Here the supporting cast—seven non-Equity actors—struggled into their make-up and costumes. There wasn't an inch of unused space.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ragged dinner jackets with grease-paint stains on the velvet lapels hung on rusty nails. A long shelf was buried under a pile of crumpled tissues, cold cream jars, and dead cigarette butts. The seven actors sat gazing at their images in the long mirror that ran the length of the wall.

In the eight weeks of rehearsals they had worked an average of twelve hours a day, seven days a week, at the most tedious labor a man can perform—*waiting*. Waiting for cues so that they could read their few lines of dialogue; waiting for breaks so that they could go out and smoke; waiting for the director to finish his criticisms so that they could go home to their small apartments with peeling walls. They were paid ten dollars a week for performances and five dollars a week for rehearsals. Most of them had quit office jobs when they got cast and from then on had lived on their savings. One meal a day, one pack of cigarettes a week. Popcorn and water can be very filling, and Broadway and 42nd Street were in walking distance—even if it meant walking forty blocks.

Tonight they would open in a play and each had his personal dream of being lifted into theatrical history with the coveted mention: "Also good were . . ." When the play closed they would be back at their old jobs at the insurance office or the supermarket, again waiting for another announcement of open casting for non-Equity actors. Thus, their lives became a series of dirty, cluttered hallways with ragged tuxedos hanging from rusty nails.

Right now they were waiting again—waiting for the curtain to rise; and while waiting, they indulged in the favorite occupation of bit players—criticizing the leads.

"Saul Brooks isn't a bad actor," said the young, shallow-faced boy with sideburns. "But he lacks depth, emotional depth."

"Yeah," agreed the gaunt, bearded boy with billows of curls on his head. "Strictly technique. External. Like a phonograph with no record. Every part works perfectly—but there's no music." He was the poet of the group.

"He's clever though," said the boy with the liquid eyes and a weak face. "You know that scene he does with his wife—"

"Ah, Roberta! Now *there's* an actress for you. I mean a *real* actress!"

"She's fabulous. I never tire of watching her during that ax scene."

"Her voice, her movements, her whole personality changes when she sets foot on that stage. *That's* acting!"

It should be noted that all the speakers were men—they had no ambitions to play Roberta's part. It should also be noted that while they talked, Saul Brooks was sitting in the darkened theater, gaz-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing at the empty stage, and listening to every word.

Opening night is traditionally a night of strained nerves, quick temper, and unendurable tension. However, as the show had already been done before five preview audiences and received favorable response, the cast went about their preparations with comparatively controlled emotions—that is, compared to Saul Brooks who found it a night of strained nerves, quick temper, and unendurable tension.

Roberta spent most of her makeup time finding her lost liner pencil, brushing his trousers, appraising and reappraising his appearance. With the calm resignation of a mother with a small child, she comforted and soothed him until the stage manager knocked on the door.

"Five minutes, Mr. Brooks."

Saul gave himself one last hopeless look in the mirror and started out the door.

"Good luck, dear," Roberta said.

He muttered something that sounded remotely like "Thanks" and made his way down to the backstage area with an expression of deep agony.

As he stood there in the dark before the muslin door, and waited centuries for the curtain to go up, he repeated his lines to himself, feeling sure that they would all leave him once he got on stage. By the time he saw the curtain rising into the tormentor and heard the rustling of the audience as they settled down, his hands were trembling and beads of sweat tingled on his forehead.

Seven lines before his entrance cue he had his moist fingers on the doorknob. When the cue rang out like a death knoll he wrenched open the door and stepped out into a sea of fire. His eyes blanched under the dazzling lights and he heard the sound of hesitant applause. He was not too well known and the audience was dubious about how to receive him. To his own ears it sounded like a groan of disappointment. He felt that he had already done something wrong and that the whole performance would be a complete disaster.

This dread was given concrete form in the second act. He heard a familiar cue, but suddenly his memory refused to function. The world stood still while his mind raced about like a decapitated chicken. After a pause of unendurable torment he heard Roberta's voice. Artfully, gracefully, without losing a shred of characterization, she gently ad-libbed him back into the action. The play proceeded, but from then on Saul Brooks felt as if he were two paces behind everyone else. As he stumbled off the stage in what appeared to him to be an uncontrollable drunken stagger, the curtain fell and the audience half-heartedly applauded the second act.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Roberta was right behind him, her hand on his shoulder.

"It could have happened to anyone."

He pulled away without looking at her. "Yeah," he muttered and looked up to see the rest of the company staring at him. They all gave him a sympathetic smile (or was it a sarcastic one?) and walked off. His jaws pressed down hard. The pain helped to erase the bitter memory.

Near the end of the third act Saul Brooks (as the character, Ivan Borskin) was to sit at the bar and feign sleep. The other actors droned on around him, but he sat with his eyes closed, and thought. He remembered the conversation in the non-Equity dressing room. He remembered the long years he had waited for this night. He thought of Roberta—cool, self-assured, *fabulous* Roberta. Even now the critics were sitting out there, shifting in their seats, merely tolerating him in hopes of seeing Roberta again . . .

His fists formed in his lap. His eyes squinted open and fell on the ax.

The door of the inn opened and Roberta entered. Still the same calm, unruffled Roberta. The innkeeper welcomed her with fawning courtesy and led her to the bench.

"My carriage wheel is broken," she said.

"I'll attend to it at once, your Excellency," said the innkeeper, and rushed out.

"It's stuffy in here," she said to Bruce. "Open the door."

"Yes, madam."

The breeze from the outside was supposed to rouse Saul Brooks but he had been staring at her ever since she had entered the stage.

"Marie?" His voice had a new strength, a strange confidence.

"I beg your pardon?"

He rose and went to her, looking deep into her eyes. "Marie . . . It *is* you!"

She rose quickly. "Get away from me."

He followed her as she backed away, beginning to take immense pleasure in her fear, even if it was only a representation of fear. He longed to make it genuine terror.

"Marie, please . . . look at me. Don't turn away. It's me, Ivan. Please, Marie."

"Denis, don't just stand there!"

As Bruce started to make the pass with his riding crop, Saul Brooks reach over and flung him across the room. Bruce's eyes widened in astonishment. Saul's hand clamped on Roberta's wrist. She winced and gazed at him, puzzled.

"Can't you *look* at me? Did you think I was dead? Did you think I'd ever forget *you?* Are you afraid to look at me? Is that it, Roberta? Are you afraid?"

At last he could see it! A genuine fear was breaking out on her

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

face. She *was* terrified—just as he had been in the second act. His heart started to laugh.

Then her face changed. As in rehearsals she straightened up. Her lips curled in a sneer. Her strength began to tower over his. He could hear the voice of the shallow youth in his brain. "There's a *real* actress!"

"Take your hands off me, you fool."

Fire ignited in Saul Brooks's eyes. He hurled her to the floor and grabbed the ax. It glistened over his head.

"You damn—"

All the way down he watched her face, begging for her to scream . . .

Judge Harrison was completely confused. It was the first murder trial he had ever presided over in which the defense admitted that the defendant had committed the act, but put the blame on a character in a play.

For two weeks a parade of witnesses, all supposed to be authorities on acting, quoted from Stanislavsky, Boleslavsky, and all the current exponents of "method" acting. The argument was briefly this: although Saul Brooks had swung the ax that had split open the skull of his wife, his own personality and moral responsibilities had been dissolved into the character of Ivan Borskin.

It was well-known, contended Brooks's lawyer, that there are certain moments when inspiration can take possession of an actor, when he actually *becomes* the character he is playing. In that brief instant the torments and agony of Ivan Borskin (a creature of imagination) had seized the heart and mind of Saul Brooks—and it was Ivan Borskin who was guilty of murder, not Saul Brooks.

To add to the judge's confusion, the jury seemed to understand every word that was said. The modern public had been so indoctrinated in the current "method" school of acting that the argument seemed perfectly reasonable to them. To Judge Harrison, who had not seen a play in twenty years, it sounded like a fearful lot of claptrap.

When the jury voted "Not Guilty," Judge Harrison could do no more than shake his head in bewilderment, and release Saul Brooks.

The newspapers played it up big. All the critics gave their oaths that when Saul Brooks first entered the stage they *knew* he was giving an inspired performance; they even mentioned that wonderful pause in the second act ("... so untheatrical, but so real!") which proved conclusively that his entire being was under the control of Ivan Borskin.

The "method" supporters, the acting teachers, the beatniks of Greenwich Village, the angry young geniuses of Washington

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Square—suddenly they all took Saul Brooks to their hearts. Here was the devastating answer to the critics who had ridiculed the miraculous transformation. Indeed, Saul Brooks became so much of a living legend that the dead, mutilated body of Roberta was forgotten.

Saul and his agent talked things over. The latter was completely astonished at the paradoxical popularity which the scandal had brought to his client. Offers from television, movies, and Broadway poured in. But the agent was a shrewd man, wise in the way of public opinion, as his advice to Saul Brooks proved.

"If we make it look like we're capitalizing on this thing, we'll lose them. If we wait a while they'll have their tongues hanging out. Then we play it for keeps. Can't you see the headlines? 'Saul Brooks Comes Out of Retirement!' 'The Master Returns to the Stage!' "

He urged Saul to go off for a while in seclusion. The agent would keep the publicity pot boiling.

So for six months Saul Brooks kept out of sight. Then the news broke. The theatrical pages screamed: *BROOKS COMES OUT OF RETIREMENT! THE MASTER RETURNS TO THE STAGE!*

As the agent had predicted, it caused a sensation. The same people who applauded his entrance hesitantly off-Broadway now trampled over one another in an effort to get tickets to see him on-Broadway. He was to open in a revival of *Hamlet* with himself as the lead. For added effect his agent had arranged to have Anton Volchek direct (that dull little man was now known as a genius), and he hired most of the original cast of the fatal Russian play.

In rehearsals Saul Brooks was still the same meticulous, quick-tempered "star," but now when he passed the dressing rooms he heard a different conversation among the supporting players.

"God! Did you see him during the dueling scene!" exclaimed the shallow-faced youth with sideburns. "You could see the actual figure of Hamlet standing there.'

"The guy is fabulous," said the gaunt, bearded boy. "Just being on the stage with him—you can feel the electricity."

"There's a *real* actor!"

Opening night was perfection itself. With every studied movement, with every carefully planned gesture, Saul Brooks could sense the audience following him with awe.

After the performance a party for the cast took place at Saul's apartment. From the sound of the applause (nine curtain calls) the company knew they had a hit, so waiting for the reviews was just an observed tradition. Drinks were guzzled, jokes were retold, glee burst from the lowliest stagehand.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

So as not to dampen the festive atmosphere of the evening, all photographs of Roberta had been carefully put away.

Fifteen minutes before the first paper hit the streets, Saul Brooks wandered into the library and settled into a chair; he sighed with contentment.

"The sound of a satisfied man," said a voice.

Saul Brooks turned and saw Bruce Kennedy standing behind him with a glass in his hand.

"Oh, Bruce! Have the reviews come in yet?"

Bruce shook his head. "Nothing to worry about. You gave your usual inspired performance."

"You've been tying one on, I see."

"I suppose I have," answered Bruce, his voice growing bitter. "Does the great star mind?"

Saul frowned. Jealousy, eh? Well, he'd have to contend with that from now on. He grunted and struck back. "No, but the great star objects to your performance as Laertes. You know yourself that the duel scene is sloppy. I could feel that blade almost brush my hair."

For a curious moment he thought he heard Bruce chuckling. "Too close for you?"

"Yes. Now that you mention it."

Bruce nodded, smiling. "Yes, but not as close as Roberta's, was it?"

Had the scene been acted on the stage, the next moment would have been called a pregnant pause.

Bruce slammed his glass on the table. "Tell me, Saul, how did you find out?"

"What are you talking about?"

"We thought we were being so clever about it. We never so much as looked at one another in public. We thought you were too engrossed with yourself to notice. Did you follow her? Was that it?"

Saul was silent, but the lines on his brow deepened.

"We were going to tell you—after the show opened. We didn't want to hit you with it while you had all that on your mind. You might almost say we were being extremely considerate of you, Saul." It looked as if he were going to laugh—but it came out as a sort of sharp cry of pain. "You *are* a great actor. I could have sworn you didn't know."

"You and Roberta?"

"All right. The curtain is down, the performance is over. Surely you knew that Roberta wasn't meant to be a nursemaid."

"What—?"

"Stop it! I'm being honest with you and I expect you to be the same. I loved her, Saul—so you can imagine what I feel toward you."

"I swear I didn't know—"

Bruce almost shouted. "Then why did you call her Roberta just before you did it? Was that part of the inspired performance?"

Saul rubbed his face and tried to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

clear his head. Bruce looked like a stage drunk and was spouting lines that not even a ham would dare utter.

"Now *I* have an opportunity to give an inspired performance, Saul. I'm perfectly cast for it. Laertes is supposed to avenge Ophelia's death, isn't he? For over four hundred years he's tried to kill Hamlet for it. It's about time he succeeded."

"What are you getting at?"

"Can't you guess? The duel! It's so perfect that I couldn't believe it. Some night, Saul. I don't know which. Neither will you. But some night I'll be thinking of Roberta and what you did to her and then *I'll* become inspired. I studied swordsmanship as a boy. It was part of my acting training. Believe me, you rush about so clumsily that I could do it whenever I wish. Some night, Saul, the sword won't just brush your head. It'll cut it open."

"You couldn't get away with it."

"No? You now have a reputation for being overemotional with your roles. Suppose I see it in your eyes. Suppose I tell how I knew you were out to kill again and all I did was to defend myself. The jury believed it once, they'll believe it again."

Suddenly the noise of cheering was heard from the next room. Bruce lifted his glass.

"Sounds like the reviews are good. Here's to a long, *long* run."

Saul folded his arms across his chest and tried to stay calm. "The minute I leave this room I'm going to have you fired."

"Fine!" laughed Bruce. "Why not? What's to prevent it? And what's to prevent me from telling others what I just told you? I have some letters Roberta wrote me. I can produce people who saw us together. Maybe I can't *prove* you knew about us, but I can start a doubt. Your magnificent performance that night will take a new meaning when they hear that Roberta was unfaithful to you. What do you think will happen to your following then, eh? There's only one thing people like better than discovering a genius—and that is to ruin a hoax. Could you live without it, Saul? You could never work in the theater again.

Saul rose, looked at Bruce, and tried to laugh. It sounded hollow. "You drunken fool. What is this? An audition? You don't expect me to be impressed by this, do you? You're having a fine time making a clown out of yourself. You know what I think? I think you won't remember a word of this in the morning."

"But you don't know for sure, do you, Saul?" The smile widened Bruce's ludicrous face. "And you have the agony of indecision. Fire me—and face total ruin. Or night after night face uncertain death. And what makes it even more perfect—you'll never know for sure, will you?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDITORS' FILE CARD

AUTHOR: **THEODORE STURGEON**

TITLE: ***In the Hospital***

TYPE: Petit Guignol

LOCALE: Anywhere

TIME: The Present

COMMENTS: *Anthony Boucher has called this "a grisly crime vignette"—and indeed it is . . .*

THEY WOULDN'T LET ME GO, EVEN when the clatter of dishes and the meaningless talk and complaining annoyed me. They knew it annoyed me; they must have. Starch and boredom and the flat-white dead smell. They knew it. They knew I hated it, so every night was the same.

I could go out. Not really; not all the way out, to the places where people were not dressed in gray robes and long itchy flannel. But I could go outside where I could see the sky and smell the river and smoke a cigarette. If I closed the door tight and moved all the way over to the rail, and watched and smelled very carefully, sometimes I could forget the things inside the building and those inside me, too.

I liked the night. I lit my cigarette and I looked at the sky. Clotted, it was, and clean between clouds. The air was cold and warmed me, and down on the river a long golden ribbon was tied to a light on the other side, and lay across the water. My music came to me again, faintly, tuning up. I was very proud of my music because it was mine. It was a thing that belonged to me, and not to the hospital, like the itchy flannel and the gray robe. The hospital had old red buildings and fences and a great many nurses who knew briskly of bedpans, but it had no music about it, anywhere, anywhere.

A light mist lay just above the ground because there were garbage cans in a battered row, and the mist was very clean and would not go

Copyright, 1953, by Theodore Sturgeon; originally titled "The Music"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

among them. Entrance music played gently for the cat.

It was a black and white mangy cat. It padded out of the shadow into the clearing before the cans and stood with its head on one side, waving its tail. It was lean and moved like a beautiful thing.

Then there was the rat, the fat little brown bundle with its long worm of a tail. The rat glided out from between the cans, froze, and dropped on its belly. The music fell in pitch to meet the rise in volume, and the cat tensed. There was a pain about me somewhere and I realized distantly that my fingernails were biting into my tongue. *My* rat, *my* cat, *my* music.

The cat sprang, and the rat drew first blood and squealed and died out there in the open where it could see its own blood. The cat licked its wound and yowled and tore at the quivering thing. There was blood on the rat and on the cat and on my tongue.

I turned away, shaken and exultant, as the music repeated its death-motif in echo. She was coming out of the building. Inside she was Miss Starchy but now she was a brown bundle—a little fat brown bundle. I was lean and moved like a beautiful thing . . . she smiled at me and turned to the steps. I was very happy and I moved along beside her, looking down at her soft throat.

We went out into the mist together.

In front of the cans she stopped and looked at me with her eyes very wide . . . eyes that in a few moments would never close or open again.

CURRENT MYSTERY AND SUSPENSE PAPERBACKS

AUTHOR	TITLE	PUBLISHER	PRICE	ON SALE
Eberhart, Mignon G.	THE CUP, THE BLADE OR THE GUN	Popular Library	40¢	11/15/62
Hamilton, Donald	MURDERER'S ROW	Gold Medal	35¢	10/30/62
Mason, Raymond	SOMEONE AND FILICIA WARWICK	Gold Medal	35¢	10/30/62
Mather, Berkeley	THE ACHILLES AFFAIR	Bantam Books	40¢	11/1/62
Prather, Richard S.	DANCE WITH THE DEAD	Gold Medal	40¢	10/30/62

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDITORS' FILE CARD

AUTHOR: **RICHARD BANKS**

TITLE: ***Roboticide Squad***

TYPE: Detective Story

DETECTOBOTS: RRR, Inc.

LOCALE: Everywhere

TIME: The Future

COMMENTS: *Can you conceive of the people in the future finding a way to use the act of murder for a good purpose? . . . A story of robots—especially of policobots and detectobots . . .*

SITTIE PRETTY'S SIGNALS BEGAN coming in at 9:35 P.M. and Fergus Swiffert put down his book with a sigh. Business was good, almost too good for a guy who liked to read.

He reached for the telephone beside his bed, punched the third button to the right on the top row. Ax answered almost before the first ring was over. Ax—Axelrod Olson—was his partner in RRR, Inc.

"Blips," said Fergus in a sad voice. "And I was in the best part of the book."

"Got my hat on," said Ax. His voice was big and solid like a traffic policobot's. But friendly, like a nursobot's or a teachobot's. "My finder puts the jingle about 26.22.-07," he said.

Fergus got his own finder out of his breast pocket, the little flat box like an oldtime pocket radio. He checked its dial where the blips were making a needle flip like the tail of a courting thrush. With every flip a tiny ding pushed out sound waves not over two feet.

"I read it 26.45.15," he said. He squinted an eye in rapid calculation. "Meet you in fifteen minutes at the corner of Larch and Gumbull."

"You ever see the like of this Sittie Pretty?" Ax rumbled.

Fergus Swiffert never had. She had been with them only three

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

months, or since she came out of the factory as a brand-new styling and model. It was a shame she was a robot. Call her android, call her anything, it was still a shame. And if she had to be a robot, why couldn't she have been a cookobot or a servobot or—he grinned—a sleepobot. Something, at least, quiet and inside and lovey.

Fergus walked out the door of RRR (Reasonable Robot Reactions), Inc., and slipped into his unijet harness. Once in a while something happened to these new female robots—like the something that used to happen once in a great while that produced the world-renowned beautiful woman, the woman of all women. Who could tell what it was? Robotics wasn't a completely known science yet, even after all these many generations.

He and Ax arrived at Larch and Gumbull almost at the same moment. They unharnessed the unijets and plunked them together in a wall locker, one of dozens of such lockers along the side of the corner building.

But Fergus gave Ax the locker key—Ax was the steady never-lose-a-thing partner.

They walked rapidly down Gumbull for a block but the blips got no higher. They turned back, walked along Larch, and the blips began to tune up a bit.

At the garish front of a bar eight blocks away the blips reached proper tone; they put their hands in their pockets and turned off the finders.

"The Parakeet Plage," Fergus growled. "Wouldn't you know?"

He forked a thumb toward the door and Ax went in first. Sittie Pretty was at a little table on the west wall, looking gorgeous and glamorous and blonde and come-hitherish.

Fergus let out a long breath. He was beginning to worry too much about her. "Come on," he said. They went over and sat down, one on each side of her.

"Hi," said Ax in his solid teachobot voice.

Sittie smiled but she was now the field dog on point. "Next table," she said in her most dulcet tones.

Fergus grinned. "No kiss for Papa?" he said leaning forward.

Sittie smiled again. Maybe it was the same smile. "The man, this time," she said comfortably but firmly.

They looked at the next table—at the man with the dark-haired girl. He was in a red tuxedo, all the rage this season, and his long-cut hair was sideburned after the fashion of actors. He was sitting with one hand jammed down in a pocket of his coat, the other jerking a swizzle stick in his drink.

"Perfectly harmless," Ax said to Fergus. "A nice guy out on the town with a beautiful woman. Romance and all that sort of thing."

The electronic band in its black metal box in the far corner struck

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

up a soft tune but the man's eyebrows twitched spasmodically at the sudden notes.

"What's the bet this time?" Fergus wanted to know. "Will he kick over the table or heave his glass at the bartender or shout bad words or beat the gal—or what?"

Sittie Pretty smiled companionably at both of them, one of her gorgeous hands idle on the table, the other quiet in her lap.

"The explosion," she said lovingly, "Will not be long. As a matter of fact, it is overdue."

Ax and Fergus made their bet, Fergus taking the heaved glass and Ax taking the bad words.

The waiter arrived at their table and the faint click every thirty seconds announced he was a waitobot, not a human. They ordered whiskey for themselves and a pink froth for Sittie and the waitobot raised an eyebrow.

Pink froth was the robot drink. It evaporated in the mouth so that no moisture reached delicate inside mechanisms.

"I tampered with her," Fergus said, like a six-year-old boy announcing he had fixed the clock. "She doesn't click any more."

"Yes, sir," said the waitobot, lowering the eyebrow. "Isn't that against the law, sir?"

Ax looked pained. "You and your big mouth," he said to Fergus. Then he looked up at the waitobot and stuck an accusing finger at Fergus. "Detectobot," he said in a low voice. "But he's got a fun streak."

The waitobot had no fun streak. He just glared at Fergus, then turned away and went to the end of the bar to get their drinks. Fergus snorted.

"Detectobot," he said.

"Well, I had to say something," said Ax in his deepest policobot tone.

Sittie Pretty sat forward in a smooth but rapid but gorgeous motion.

"Alert," she said. It was like yelling fire in a whisper.

"Uffum," Fergus snapped, and both men fell silent.

Uffum did something to Sittie Pretty. She swiveled around in her chair and faced the next table. Her eyes changed color in a subtle way and she stared without blinking at the brunette sitting with the red tuxedo.

And it was silent and it was silent and . . .

"No," the man at the next table shouted. "I did not say that. You're a liar. You're a bitch. You're a—" He shoved his chair back so hard it kept on going as he leaped up. It hit the wall with a crash and the bartender jerked and his hand went swiftly up to tug at the cord over his head. The electronic band shut up instantly.

And it was silent . . .

"You know what else you are," the man erupted again. "You're—you're a damn liar."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The brunette was scared. "Charley," she said. "Charley, darling—"

"I'll say it again, I'll tell it to the whole world," the man shouted. "You're a damn stinking pizzle-witted getting-fat liar."

The bartender was moving around the end of the bar, but you could tell he didn't know exactly what to do. The embarrassed customers were trying to look for things deep in their drinks. Ax was checking a fingernail and Fergus had his chin in his hand, leaning on the table in complete enjoyment.

"Nothing like a good oldfashioned fight like in the good old days," he said to Ax. "How's our bank account?"

"Blossoming since Sittie," Ax said with a grin.

"Make room for more," said Fergus. He took Sittie Pretty's fine and splendid hand and squeezed it. "I love you, baby," he said. She didn't move. Her changed eyes were locked on the brunette who was saying, "But Charley, darling, all I said was—"

"Charley darling, Charley darling," the man yelled. "You know what else you are, you—you—" He swept his glass up from the table, dashed the drink in the brunette's face, then slammed the glass on the floor where his feet went tromp, tromp, tromp. You could hear the brittle battle as the glass went into bits.

The brunette's wail was now harsh and eerie. The world didn't hear many women wail any more —or men either, for that matter. It was a placid world. Almost no violence.

The red tuxedo swept straight down the barroom, making for the front door. Sittie Pretty began moving. She was up and over to the brunette's side, had her arms around her, murmuring things, and listening to the brunette's incoherent replies.

Fergus brushed a piece of lint from his right sleeve. "Tie bet," he said, and stood up. "See you later. And take care of my little loveybot."

Ax looked disgusted. But as Fergus went after the red tuxedo Ax began grinning again. By the time Fergus reached the door he had developed a weave and a swagger like a man with a little too much to drink, and he had begun singing an old, old song in a mulled voice.

"What a Barrymorobot," Ax muttered. . . .

Ax arrived at work at 9 A.M., shucked off his unijet, put it on the rack inside the front door, and started a whistle of contentment as he went toward his own cubbyhole office. Fergus wouldn't be up yet. Fergus might have had to work pretty late.

Sittie Pretty was stretched out on the blue velvet couch in the inner showroom. Ax thought better of his office, went to sit on the side of the couch.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Awake," he said gently. Sittie's eyes blinked and took themselves away from the ceiling and came to his face. She smiled a pretty but splendid but superb smile and although he would never have admitted it, Ax knew what Fergus meant about her. It *was* a shame.

"Good morning?" she said.

"Good morning," he said. He took her fine and splendid hand. "And good work last night."

She just smiled. "Fergus darling?" she said and Ax grimaced. That darned Fergus, teaching her behind his back. Teaching her?

"Asleep, I suppose," he rumbled.

Sittie Pretty stirred. She lifted her round and attractive legs straight up into the air, swung them past Ax's face, and let them down to the floor. Then she got up.

"You could have asked me to move," said Ax grinning. But he was blushing a little. The legs had been round and attractive clear up. Robots did do some of the cutest things.

Sittie went to Fergus' bedroom and opened the door, going to the bed. Fergus was curled up with his pillow half over his frowsled head. Ax gave a big sigh and went toward his cubbyhole. She was only a robot and Fergus was crazy to treat her any differently. So was he. It didn't mean anything to her, and what the hell was the use if it didn't mean anything to the girl?

Sittie's eyes puzzled over Fergus and she put a fine and tapered finger to his cheek.

"Fergus darling?"

And it was silent.

She sat down on the edge of the bed, as Ax had sat on hers.

"Good morning?" she said.

Fergus stirred. But it was silent.

She bent down over him and put her face an inch from his. And a frown came to her and it was a puzzle and she put a fine and splendid hand to his cheek again.

"Awake?" she said.

Fergus stirred again and opened his eyes.

And then he was awake like the sun popping out over a green mountain.

He swept his free arm around her and pressed her face to him. And he kissed her. And it was fine and splendid. And then he saw the frown and the puzzle.

"It's all right," he whispered. "Let it puzzle. It puzzles me, too."

"Good morning?" said Sittie.

"Ah, yes, good morning, my darling," he said with a laugh.

He pushed her upright, put a naked foot to her fine and splendid rear, and shoved. She would have plunked off the bed and crashed on the floor if she had been a human. But she was on her feet in a smooth and attractive way by the time he had withdrawn his foot.

"Now start over again," said Fergus, stretching luxuriously on his bed. "First, you bend down—"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

she bent down—"then you put your face close—" she put her fine and lovely face close—"and then you kiss. Remember? Kiss. Like this—" and again he pressed his lips against her fine and splendid lips.

Was that a faint shudder he felt through her shoulder?

And it was silent and it was silent.

When their lips parted he had a frown caught on his own face.

"Fergus darling?" she said, and he squeezed her so tightly she would have bent somewhere if she had been one of those oldfashioned robots.

"And only three months old, too," Fergus said to the ceiling. That had sounded almost like human breath coming from her lips at the tightest part of his squeeze.

And it was silent.

But then Fergus pushed her roughly away. "Go get Ax," he said.

Sittie Pretty got up immediately in a fine and graceful way and went out of the room without a backward glance. And Fergus, as he got out of bed and began dressing, didn't rightly know why he was so angry.

They had coffee sitting around the black table in the inner showroom. And it wasn't just the three of them. Fergus had activated three of the male androids, handsome chunks, and two of the female androids, raving-beauty chunks, to sit with them. And as business had been so good since Sittie Pretty arrived, Fergus bustled about and mixed up a pot of pink froth for the robots. It was almost festive.

Fergus made Sittie Pretty sit between the other two females. And he stared at the three girls, hard, intent, almost angrily. Then he shook his head.

"All right, Ax," he said. "Business."

The man in the red tuxedo had not taken too long to break down. He was pretty far gone. His name was Elfus Sweeney, the Elfus part being of that new fad everybody was taking up. He lived at 217 Marthian Drive, had enough money—maybe not too much, but enough. Owned at least ten robots of various sorts.

"I went home with him," said Fergus, "and we had more drinks and he told me a great deal. I also implanted the first big motivating chunk in him. He's all set."

"Soon?" said Ax.

"Today, maybe," said Fergus. He frowned. "You know, he only had five books on his library shelf."

Ax looked grieved. "You and your books," he growled.

"But two were books of poetry," said Fergus with a grin, like a little boy saying that two of five mudpies had real custard fillings.

"Telephone?" said Sittie Pretty.

Fergus smiled at her. "Yes," he said, "Yes, darling, you telephone

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

him. But not yet. Let's wait until afternoon. He'll have a hangover."

They had a customer at 11 A.M knocking at their door a week or two before they had expected her.

She was a well-dressed woman with a suspicion of dark bags under her brown eyes and just a faint straggle at the back of her graying hair. She bought one of the female robots and signed the service contract for five free repair jobs.

Fergus activated the female when all the business details had been attended to.

"This is Mrs. Olivia Gilson," he said. "She has bought you, darling. Isn't that nice?"

"Nice," said the robot. She was extremely pretty—prettier really than most human females. But then, that was part of the plan of RRR, Inc. Women could buy only female robots, men only male robots. But the female robots always had to be much more beautiful than the female owners. And the male robots always had to be handsomer than the male purchaser.

After Mrs. Gilson and her new android had left, they had lunch, but this time Fergus had got into a mood and only Sittie Pretty sat with them. The other robots were back on their couches.

"The roughest part of this business," he announced to Ax, "is not the people, it's the robots." He looked at Sittie Pretty. "If I had the faintest inkling that a robot could *feel*—"

"Watch it," said Ax in his solemn voice. "Don't let it get you."

"Fergus darling?" said Sittie.

Fergus fondled her fine and splendid hand. And it was silent.

At one P.M. he went in to read his book.

At two, he put down the book and went out to the blue velvet couch and sat down on the edge.

"Awake," he said gently. Sittie's eyes blinked and came away from the ceiling.

"Good morning?" she said.

"Good afternoon," he said.

"Good afternoon?" Her voice was beginning to keep a constant shiver alive in him. How did her kind of robot ever get such a voice? The roboticists hadn't bothered to build it into her, he knew.

She raised her long and attractive legs straight up and swung them past his face, putting them down to the floor and rising all in one fluid and fine and splendid motion.

"Telephone?" she said.

"Yes, telephone, my constant bloodhound," Fergus said. "Go get Ax. He'll want to listen."

She fetched Ax and sat down at the black desk and took the telephone out of its niche underneath.

"The number is 6724-5682," Fergus said, watching her fine and tapered finger punch the digits. He kept his eyes on her for the few seconds it took Elfus Sweeney to answer. At the first faint sound Fergus said "Uffum." All robots

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had their own key syllables which activated their specialties.

Sittie Pretty's eyes changed. Her body changed. Her voice, when it began, was the voice of the brunette in the bar. Exactly. Without defect. By the time she was through, Elfus Sweeney was shouting and screaming over the telephone, heaved back into the excessive violence of the night before.

Ax and Fergus exchanged a glance. Sittie Pretty was a fine and splendid robot, too.

At exactly the right moment she hung up. Then she put the telephone away—and almost instantly the uffum wore off and she was Sittie Pretty again.

"Fergus darling?" she said looking around for him.

"Damn," said Ax and stomped off to his cubbyhole office. . . .

It was almost five P.M. before Elfus Sweeney pounded on the silver front door with its dignified RRR, Inc. engraved on it in little blue letters.

"About time," said Fergus with a sigh. He closed his book over the robot-figurine marker and got up. "Ax," he yelled as he went toward the door.

Elfus Sweeney was in a sad state, nervous, edgy, intense.

"I've been unijetting the countryside all afternoon," he blurted as Fergus showed him into the inner showroom. "I don't know what's the matter with me. If you only knew—"

"This is my partner, Mr. Axelrod Olson," said Fergus.

They shook hands. "Pleased," said Ax in his teachobot voice and a wrinkle cleared away from Sweeney's forehead. Ax had that instant effect on people.

On impulse, Fergus turned the new customer to where Sittie Pretty was sitting in her fine and splendid way in the blue velvet chair Fergus had bought her, to go with the blue velvet couch.

"And this," he said, "is our assistant, Miss Sittie Pretty. Sittie, this is Elfus Sweeney."

Sittie smiled in her soft and superb way and another wrinkle faded from Elfus Sweeney's forehead.

"Sit over here," said Ax, taking Sweeney's arm. He put him in the customer chair, facing away from that part of the showroom where the robots were abed behind drawn curtains, staring unblinking at the ceiling.

"Let me be frank," Fergus was saying. "When my partner and I decided to go into business it was to make our fortune, naturally. But we both had picked up somehow, somewhere, a bit of criticism inside ourselves for the society we all live in."

"Yes, yes," said Elfus Sweeney in a tone of voice which generations and generations ago would have come out as "You can say that again."

"So we decided," Fergus con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tinued, "that perhaps we could make our fortune and at the same time change or alleviate a certain defect in our society."

"It took a bit of doing," said Ax.

"That it did," said Fergus. "We felt that modern society, despite all its security, lack of war, the good life, lack of disease—despite all this, we felt that society misses in one respect. It tends to become so placid that it creates in certain people tensions almost as bad as former cultures provoked."

"Yes, yes," said Elfus Sweeney. "Go on."

"Do you know an old word—murder?" Fergus said.

Sweeney shivered and nodded. "I looked it up in the book museum," he said.

"We laid our plans," Fergus went on, "for our business and we went to the Government and talked to the people in the national Department of Psychology and explained what we were going to do. We wanted everything to be legal and aboveboard, you know."

"Beyond reproach," said Sweeney with a nervous giggle.

"Beyond reproach," said Fergus. "The Government didn't think we could do it, although they admitted they were deeply aware of what we had found—the defect in our society. But—" he threw out his hands—"we've done it, Mr. Sweeney. We are a successful business. I wish we could show you our long list of satisfied customers."

"Long?" said Sweeney.

"Yards," said Fergus with a grin. "However, we must keep their names—and yours, sir—a secret. Not even the Government will ever see them. We'd destroy the names first."

"But it really isn't murder," Ax put in, using his best nursobot tone.

Elfus Sweeney fidgeted. "You promised me a demonstration," he said. "Last night, remember?"

"Ah, the demonstration," said Fergus, rubbing his hands together. He turned to Sittie Pretty. "Will you leave the room please, darling?"

Sittie got up in her fine and splendid way and left the room.

"A robot, Ax," Fergus said, "and on with the demonstration."

While Ax was activating one of the male robots, Fergus became extremely confidential to Elfus Sweeney.

"You see," he said, "everything has to be absolutely precise. Our robots—or androids, or whatever you want to call them—are made to our own particular order. They are no good for anything else but the job they were designed to do. They sit in your house until the moment their subtle mechanisms feel the tension in you at bursting point. They smell extreme tension, you might say, the way a dog smells anger or fear or despair in a man. And this activates them so that they will give you the—ah—

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

chance to break your tension violently, the only method that has ever been found successful."

"M-murder?" said Elfus Sweeney.

"Not really murder," said Fergus. "It's only a robot, remember."

"Amen," said Ax in his nursobot voice, coming back with a handsome robot in tow.

The robot sat down placidly in the blue velvet chair before Fergus could stop him. Fergus scowled but left him there.

"You'll notice the face," said Fergus, like a salesman in an old-time furniture store. "The face, I do think, is our most successful piece of thinking. Notice how serene, how kind, how sympathetic it is."

"Yes, yes," said Elfus Sweeney. "And the demonstration?"

Fergus smote his forehead.

"Look," he said, "why didn't I think of this before? A demonstration, you say? Why not do it yourself, man? Why not prove to yourself just what we claim?"

Elfus Sweeney first looked frightened. Then, his nose twitching and his head ducking a little with excitement, he studied the robot.

"Will he do all the—all those things you said he'd do last night?"

Fergus ran to the black desk, hunted in a drawer, and came back with an old-style pistol. It gleamed in his hand like an ugly rumor of ancient wars.

"You'll get the whole kit—pistol, swords, dagger, knife, club," he said, "when we sign the final papers. But here's a pistol. Try it."

Elfus Sweeney handled the pistol as if it were hot. He didn't know how to use it. Few people did any more. But Ax showed him in his solid teachobot way.

"Now," said Fergus, being more and more the Barrymorobot and dwelling lovingly on every resonant tone in every winning syllable, "you've just returned home from the Parakeet Plage where a woman has insulted you and lied to you and—"

"Enough," yelled Elfus Sweeney, springing to his feet, his eyes beginning to glisten with tears of tension and frustration. Ax had to admire his partner. He could really be a Chief of Section in the national Department of Psychology, he told himself.

"You hate them all, you hate the world," Fergus declaimed. "And you can't stand it any more. You're going to crack up if you don't do something. Something has to happen. You can't—"

"Stop," Elfus Sweeney screamed. "Stop, stop, stop . . ."

Some new customers took a great deal of prodding. But Elfus Sweeney was easy.

The robot activated. Its face—so serene, so placid—changed.

"Oh, yeah?" it said with a sneer. "Who do you think you are, little man?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Elfus Sweeney whirled on it. The face was now haughty, disdainful. Never had a robot looked more handsome and assured; but never had a human been looked at in this way by a robot.

"You—" Sweeney cried.

"Shut up," said the robot. "You're a pitiful sight."

Sweeney's arm shot up and stiffened. His finger sought the trigger of the pistol. With a scream—no words but worlds of meaning—Sweeney shot the robot.

And it was silent and it was silent.

The robot staggered to its feet and blood spurted from its neck where the bullet had gone. It came toward Elfus Sweeney, one hand clutching at its neck like a wounded sparrow.

"You—you—" it said. But then its face began losing its haughtiness. It took on that age-old, helpless, shattered look that is so satisfying to individuals of a certain type.

Then the robot collapsed on the floor, quivered once (that was a nice touch that Fergus had gained from an age-old movie in the museum files), and lay still.

Elfus Sweeney dropped the gun on the floor and sat down, his eyes stuck on the gouts of blood still coming out of the neck.

"My God," he said.

"Exactly," said Fergus. "Ax, the smelling salts." This was another brilliant addition to the plan.

Ax produced the little green bottle, looking so sweetly ancient, and pushed it twice under Sweeney's nose. He blinked and gasped and shook his head.

Then he relaxed. He slumped in his chair and took a handkerchief energetically to his sweating forehead. You could see the tension oozing out of him.

And it was silent.

Fergus and Ax gave each other the usual grin. It was always the same when a "demonstration" was staged in the inner showroom.

Then "My God," said Elfus Sweeney, but this time it was with a gusty sigh. And suddenly he sat up. "You're right, you're absolutely right," he said. "I feel wonderful. I feel better than I have for months."

Fergus went to the black desk, took a lengthy paper out of the side drawer, and spread it out on top of the desk.

"Then it is time," he said, "for us to complete our business, Mr. Sweeney."

Elfus Sweeney got up. "But what about the—what about him?" he said, pointing to the robot-corpse on the floor.

"A simple repair job," Ax said, looking like a pleased prehistoric abbot. He whisked the robot up over one massive shoulder and started out. "By the time you've signed the papers, our repair crews will have him ready to go with you."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Ready for the *next time,*" Fergus said, leaning confidentially toward Sweeney.

"Marvelous, simply marvelous," said Elfus Sweeney. "And you say there are five free repair jobs in the sales contract?"

"Four more," said Fergus. "This was one, remember."

"Where do I sign?" Sweeney asked.

The whole thing had taken less than an hour. By 6 P.M. Fergus and Ax and Sittie Pretty were having an early dinner and Fergus had insisted on activating all the robots so that they could have pink froth and help celebrate.

Then Fergus went into his bedroom and lay down to continue with his book. And Sittie Pretty went in and sat on the side of his bed and fixed her puzzled eyes on him.

"Good morning?" she said.

"Good evening," said Fergus.

"Fergus darling?" she said.

"Sittie darling."

And it was silent and Fergus didn't read his book. He just held her fine and splendid hand, and then he made her lie down beside him and he held her fine and splendid body to him. And dreamed fine and splendid dreams.

Who could tell what she dreamed. She was a robot. He moved his hands over her soft and gorgeous body and she didn't feel like a robot.

At seven P.M. Ax came to the door and said, "Work time," and Sittie Pretty moved easily out of Fergus' arms and walked out to the inner showroom where she stood waiting.

Fergus made a terrible face at Ax. "I'm going to retire," he growled. "I'm going to quit tomorrow and take Sittie with me."

"Me, too," said Ax.

Fergus got up and they went to inspect Sittie, straightening her hair and seeing that she was neat in her fine and splendid way.

So, at last, it was time again.

"Giffle," said Fergus with a sigh.

Sittie went to the front door, opened it, and closed it after her. Just as simple as that. No backward look. If she found a prospect close to murder, her blip would start coming in so that they could rush out to find her. It didn't come in every night. But she had been finding overly tense citizens quite frequently of late. In fact, Sittie Pretty was an expert detectobot.

Fergus shrugged. "You know I'm worrying too much about her," he said.

"Cut it out," said Ax using the old slang. "Not Sittie."

Fergus went to the black desk, took out the telephone, punched the righthand bottom button which connected him straight to the Government chief in Washington.

"Fergus Swiffert, Field Chief 9, here," he said. "Yes, two cases today. One was a woman, a Mrs.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Gilson. No great problem yet. She'll be phoning us to come and get a dead robot within a week or so, I think."

He listened. "No," he said again. "A minor case, we think. Not like the one late this afternoon. Man named Elfus Sweeney, living at 217 Marthian Drive, this city. Advanced tendencies in homicide. Did our demonstration himself—yes, one of those kind. He had a definite relief, so we know it would come back on him in hours. You'll have to have him picked up tonight. It might not be a robot next time."

He listened again, rolling his eyes at Ax. "No," he broke in, "don't touch the woman yet. We'll let you know . . . Look, she's not beyond saving. Maybe this Sweeney is, but not her. I don't like the idea of you boys putting these men and women in padded cells for the rest of their lives. They can all be rehabilitated, if you ask me. Yes, even the Elfus Sweeneys."

He listened for a minute or two, then shrugged.

"All right, Chief," he said. "I was only speaking my mind. Yes, the detectobot is out roving again right now. Don't worry. We do our jobs, no matter what we think."

He put the phone into its cradle too softly.

"The boss is in a very good humor," he told Ax. "Wonder what he'll do when I send in my resignation?"

Ax made a pained sound. "You never will," he said. "You'd worry that somewhere there might be a man or a woman who would commit a murder, like ages ago. And start the whole mess in the world all over again."

"Maybe it was better that way," said Fergus.

"And you'd miss the service," said Ax. "Youre a born bloodhound type."

Fergus screwed up his face in mock disdain.

"And besides," Ax went on, "you couldn't take Sittie along. You don't own her and the Government won't part with her. She's too good."

"Fergus darling?" said Fergus, imitating her fine and lovely tone. His frown came back. What had happened to the particular brew they made Sittie Pretty out of? What strange and mysterious thing was in her?

It was after 7:30 P.M. He got up and went to lie on his bed, picking up the book.

But he couldn't read.

Ax came to the door in a few minutes—he was getting into his unijet. "I'm off for home," he said. "I'll be in touch if her blips come in."

Fergus heard him leave. He stared at the ceiling and felt loneliness beginning to tie its drag to the minutes.

Where was she now?

Ax was right. He'd never quit

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the service, but he wished he could be calmer about Sittie. I'll forget her for the evening, he told himself, and then he immediately wished her blips would start in right now so that he could rush out and find her and be with her.

He slammed his book back on the night table. But after two or three gloomy minutes he began to grin. If she didn't find a tense citizen she'd be home at one A.M.

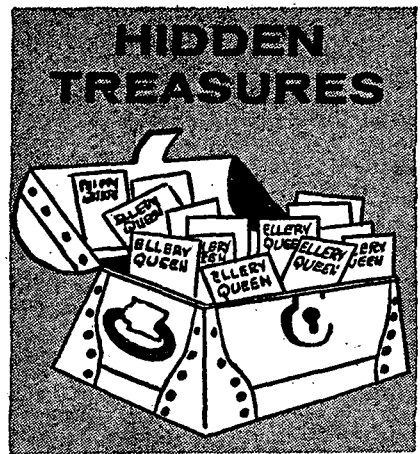
He jumped up and set his alarm clock for 12:45. He'd awaken all the robots and mix up a big pot of pink froth and they'd all have a party—a welcome-home party for her.

He wondered what Ax would say, when he found out.

"O"

SEAT BELTS SAVE LIVES!

If every car owner in America used seat belts—the National Safety Council says we could reduce auto deaths by *5,000 a year* . . . serious injuries by *one-third*. Remember that drivers kill and cripple more children than any disease. *Seat belts can save more of these children than any other method!*



We've been house-cleaning. And what do you think we found? A rare treasure-lode of back copies of ELLERY QUEEN'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE. Hundreds and hundreds in mint condition, running back as far as 1958—as recently as 1962.

Yes, we've uncovered them in closets, trunks, files—at the printer's, warehouses and our own editors' most secret compartments.

Would you like to share this "find" with us? Besides, enjoy some top reading?

Send us $1.00. We'll send you 10 (yes, ten) assorted back copies. Sorry, but requests for specific issues cannot be handled.

Original value: $3.50—you pay only $1. First come, first served, until the supply is exhausted.

ELLERY QUEEN'S HOUSEKEEPER
505 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

YES . . . here's my $1.00. Send me the ten assorted back copies of ELLERY QUEEN'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE.

Name_____
(Please Print)

Address_____

City_____ Zone____ State_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Nature puts a tiger in a boy's skin, or environment does, anyway, and it's difficult to see the beast as anything but a boy. Velvet-eyed tigers, Jim Hunter thought, have easy hunting . . ."

The Mystery Writers of America awarded its coveted "Edgar" to John Durham's "Tiger" as the best mystery short story published in American magazines in 1960.

TIGER

by JOHN DURHAM

USUALLY JIM FOUND THE POTTED geranium and philodendron a source of amusement, sitting prim as maiden ladies on the desk of a burly cop like Fred Elkins. The plants were especially incongruous since Fred had moved his three-man force into the new building, acquiring one of those desks that look like a jet on the point of take-off.

But Jim Hunter had no time for amusement this morning. He was frightened, to begin with, and that was bad enough. But it was worse that no one believed he had any reason to be afraid, including Fred, his friend, and his own family.

"Look, Fred." He spread his hands. "Do you think I'm a witch-hunter? An alarmist?"

Fred, ponderous behind the frail-seeming desk, regarded him carefully while he lit a cigar. "I didn't say that, Jim."

"Then why won't you believe me?" Jim's voice sounded high and thin in his own ears. "Why won't you listen when I tell you about this Ketterman boy?"

Fred, rolling the cigar in his mouth, turned his chair to look out the huge window to his left. Most of the town was visible from there, tiers of pastel buildings dropping down toward the surf-white beach which curved out around the inlet to meet the open Pacific.

"Maybe you're right, Jim," he said. "I didn't say you weren't right." He took a slow puff, exhaling sibilantly. "But there's a couple of questions I have in mind."

"For instance."

"Well, I mean your motivation. Why you're here. You've learned a lot about people in all those years of teaching. Okay. Well, a cop learns something, too."

"So?"

"I mean your motivation in this whole thing. The boy's a young genius, right?"

"Sure, I told you that. A brilliant

© 1960 by The Hearst Corporation: reprinted by permission of Cosmopolitan and the author.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

boy. Never in his life had he had less than an *A*. And I gave him a *C*. Lee, my own daughter, raked me over for that. But he deserved it."

"Okay. You were a very bright boy yourself, weren't you? I mean very."

"All right. So what?"

"And then there's your daughter. My own girl is a friend of Lee's. I know how a girl's father feels about boys. It's a tough thing. But natural. Especially when they start talking about marriage."

"And I put a stop to that. Of course. When neither of them's out of high school." Jim sighed wearily. "Okay. You're trying to say I have good subconscious reasons for making a villain out of this Ketterman kid."

Fred gave him an oblique stare. "There's one thing about people. The reasons they act aren't very logical. I mean the real reasons, under all the rationalizing."

"All right, I feel protective about my daughter. Maybe I'm even a little jealous of the boy, I don't know. But I do know he's a classic example of the psychopath. If there is such a thing, he's it. Charming, witty, handsome, brilliant. Very much aware what other people think is right and wrong." Jim leaned forward toward the big man behind the desk, this cop, his friend. "Fred," he said, "he knows what other people think is wrong, but he doesn't give a damn. What's right is what he wants. And what's wrong is what interferes with what he wants. Right now he wants to kill me."

"It sounds nice and pat," Fred said, turning back to face Jim, "but the law needs evidence."

Jim had been saving this. He'd talked with Shirley, his wife, about this thing. So he had some preparation for Fred's reaction. And he'd saved the bullet for his last, best argument. He dropped it on the desk, a scarred, slightly twisted pellet of lead. "There's your evidence."

Fred turned it curiously between thumb and forefinger.

"It's a .22 long-rifle slug that I dug out of the wall a foot from my head."

"Hmph." Fred dropped it back to the desk and looked up at Jim. "You mean the kid shot at you?"

"That's just it," Jim said. "He's always got an explanation. For everything. He knew I was working in the study. He could see me, from where he and Lee were target-shooting in the arroyo, the one that leads down to the beach."

"They were shooting toward the house?"

"No, no. Away. I've taught Lee more sense than that."

"All right, how the—"

"Let me tell you. He's clever, this boy. I was sitting there, working out those equations for Monday, and *splat!* I didn't see the hole in the paneling behind me, not at first. Just in the glass wall, toward the arroyo. I was scared . . . Well, I got up from behind the desk and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

looked down into the canyon. Lee had her face covered with her hands and Link, the Ketterman boy, was lying on the shale, with the rifle still in his hands."

Fred grunted. "What'd he say?"

"That he slipped on a rock." Jim couldn't keep the bitterness out of his voice. "Just when Lee happened to be facing the other way, toward the target."

"Is that all you got?"

"All! What do you want?"

"Will Lee get up in court and say this boy tried to kill you?"

"She thinks she loves him," Jim said, his fingers trembling on the desk edge. "Maybe she really does. I don't know." He stood up. "All right," he said. "But I want you to remember I came here. That's all. I tried to tell you."

Fred bit his lower lip. "Jim, there's not a thing—"

"Okay. I have to get home, anyway. The ice cream's probably melted all over the front seat of the car."

"Unless you want me to assign a man to—"

"No. I'd get laughed out of town."

"Well, take it easy, Jim. And I'll see you Saturday at the pier." Fred stood up, tugging at his trousers. "Catch some salmon, huh?"

"All right. Saturday." *If I live that long*, Jim thought.

Fred waited until he got to the door. "Jim," he said, "listen."

Jim turned toward him, his hand on the knob.

"It could be the way you say. I'm not saying it isn't that way. Let me know if anything else turns up."

"Sure."

"And take it easy, Jim."

Shirley was waiting for him in the carport, wearing the blue shorts and halter that always gave him a little turn, because they made her look a passionate ten years younger than her thirty-eight. Her expression was distracted. "Where've you *been?*" she said.

He lifted the bag of groceries out of the car. "At the store."

"Till five *o'clock?*"

"All right. I stopped to see Fred. I told you I might."

"Oh, really, Jim! About Link?" She gave an impatient twitch of her tanned shoulders. "Look, this is serious. I can't find Barbie and Tom. Not anywhere."

That does it, Jim thought. If he messes with those little kids. "You try the beach?" he said. "Where's Lee?"

"Over at some girl friend's. I don't know. And I looked down the arroyo at *our* beach. They're not *any*where."

"Just take it easy," he said. "And put the ice cream in the freezer. It's melting."

She took the paper bag. "Oh, I just know it's not anything," she said. "But it gets me so upset. I'll kill them when they get back."

"Don't say that," he said. It gave him a little chill. "Just our beach?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"What?"

His voice, there was no doubt, was unreasonably loud. "I said, did you try just our beach?"

"Yes. And don't you shout at me."

"All right," he said, already heading for the arroyo. "Just put the ice cream in the freezer."

He knew he shouldn't be running down the arroyo. He got winded too quickly, for one thing, after too many years of cigarettes. For another, the shale was treacherous. He should've known it would happen.

And it did, just where the steep incline began to flatten, fifty yards from the sand. He fell, but he remembered his high school gymnastics, and he rolled. "Hell," he said. And he laughed a little as he got up. There was a cut on his elbow and a slight pain in his ankle.

Limping a little, he headed down the beach to the north. Thank God it's May, he thought, and the days are long. There was a little cove up that way where he'd taken his two smaller kids to watch some skin-divers from school set up their equipment and slip into the blue water, smoothly as sea lions, and paddle out and down, to vanish in the deeps.

He'd heard Link Ketterman tell Lee that there was a big drop-off a hundred yards out, an enormous undersea cliff, filled with crevices and grottoes. If he's got those two little kids, he thought. He felt as he'd felt when he'd helped interrogate that woman guard at the German concentration camp, the one who had committed acts of unspeakable atrocity. It was the frustration of the moral man, contained by his own ethics from acting against evil. *You have to wait for them*, he thought, *the evil ones.* Eternal vigilance. And too often, you wait too long.

He heard them before he rounded the big rocks, heard them laughing. They were in the cove, all right, laughing at something Link had said. Link! Ignoring the pain in his ankle, Jim cut into the cove, running.

They were there, all right, just where the cold water foamed its last, hissed slightly, and washed back. Barbie was on one side of Link and Tom on the other, watching him work over some kind of gear, the rubber suit glistening along the muscular lines of his body.

"Daddy says we're too young to try it," Tom said, serious again.

"Okay," Link said, "if you're chicken—you—" He heard the crunch of Jim's feet in the sand and turned, the face crisply handsome, the eyes as soft as brown velvet. "Oh," he said. "Hi, there."

God, but he's cool, Jim thought, dropping to a walk, breathing fast, partly from the run, partly—

"Tom!" he said, harshly. "Barbie! What are you two doing down here?"

"Link says funny things." Tom, at five, had already acquired the in-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

direct response that avoids the guilt-pointing finger. Or tries to.

Jim grabbed him, thinking as he did how soft the young body was, how frail the breath that sustained it. But he cracked him a good one, right on the rump.

"Your mother and I have told you too many times," he said, "about getting away from the house. When do you think you'll learn?" He smacked the boy again.

Then he turned to Barbie who, backing away from him, hands lifted, wore a nervous smile on her piquantly freckled face. "Well, it was with Link. You *said* with grown-ups. You *said*, Daddy! Oh, Daddy, Daddy!"

The anguished repetition, disproportionate to the case, occurred while Jim administered equal justice to her wet, sand-plastered bottom. "Link," Jim said, setting her back on her feet, "is not a grownup. And from now on, I want you where either your mother or I can watch you. Do you understand?"

She wept noisily, nodding her head, her face cupped in her hands.

Link had watched all this calmly, still on his knees in the sand. "Gee, I'm sorry, Mr. Hunter," he said. "I didn't think you'd get upset, I mean the kids are okay, aren't they?"

Jim turned coldly toward him. "Don't get wise," he said. The tremor in his voice embarrassed him, under that amused stare.

"I didn't mean to, Mr. Hunter," the boy said. "I hope you'll accept my apologies."

Then Jim saw the equipment he was working at. Wire, a coil of fine, insulated wire. Some telephone stuff in a box, very complicated. And lead weights.

"What's the wire for?" Jim forced himself to stare into the dark eyes.

"We wanted to try some stuff with telephones, underwater," Link said. "Some of the guys in the club."

"Underwater telephone?"

Link laughed. "Sure. Well, it may not work, but we thought we'd try it. And I was going below to see if there's enough to reach."

"Well, you listen to me, Link," Jim said. "Don't you ever bring these little kids down here again. Or anywhere else." Why can't I just come right out with it? Jim thought. Oh, but he's smart! "Do you hear me?" he said.

"Of course. Whatever you say, Mr. Hunter."

Shirley was waiting for the three of them at the top of the arroyo. "You *two*," she said to the kids, giving Barbie a little shake, "are just impossible. Where *were* you? Supper's almost ready. And there's ham."

"They were in the cove," Jim told her. "With Link. Who had a coil of wire and enough lead weights to sink a horse."

"For phones," Tom said. "Way,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

way down. Link says it's pretty down there."

Jim hadn't questioned the kids yet. He'd occupied himself, on the trip back, with constraining the murderous rage that still had his muscles trembling.

"Listen, Barbie," he said, "did Link want you to go into the water?"

"Well, I don't know," she said. She slipped her hand into her mother's. Seeking the non-angry parent, Jim thought. Or the less angry. "Is there that goody-good sauce?" she said. "For the ham?"

"Sure, honey." Her mother gave her an affectionate tug at one blonde pigtail.

"Barbie," Jim said, in a flat voice that stopped all of them, just where the shadow of the carport cut a line across the thin grass. "Listen to me, Barbie."

"Well, okay, Daddy. *Okay.*" She caught her nether lip in her teeth. "I'm listening."

"Did Link say he wanted you and Tom to go in the water?"

"He was only joking, honest he was."

"But he talked about it?"

"Oh, Daddy. You're always so serious." And she ran off into the house, one broken sandal strap wisping across the sand-scattered cement. Tom trailed in after her, more slowly.

"Well, all right," Jim said, to Shirley. "Is that enough for you? Is it?"

She looked scared. And he wasn't sorry, he thought. There was a time when fear was healthy.

But she shook her head. "It's all so fantastic," she said. "The whole thing. Link is such a polite boy. And so clever."

"Yeah," Jim said. "And handsome."

She smiled, guiltily, and shrugged. "All right. He is handsome."

"And no boy that good-looking could hurt a living thing."

"I didn't say that."

"Well, it's what you're thinking." He took her shoulders in his sweated, dirty hands and looked into her eyes. "Let me tell you something, handsome or not."

"All right," she said. "What?"

"Don't let those little kids out of your sight."

"I *won't.* Oh, Jim!" she said. "You've cut yourself. There on the elbow. Let me see."

"Listen," he said. "I'll fix the elbow. You just see that the kids don't get out of your sight."

"Well, all *right.*" she sounded remarkably like Barbie.

Normality, Jim thought, stripping to shower, is so comfortable. People have to be beaten into seeing anything that's out of the ordinary. Which is why, he told himself, as the first grateful gush of cool water smote his chest, confidence men can take people in so easily.

You can't blame people, he thought, Nature puts a tiger in a boy's skin, or environment does,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

anyway, and it's difficult to see the beast as anything but a boy. Velvet-eyed tigers, he thought, have easy hunting.

It was almost even when, impatiently, he rose from the couch to turn down the volume on the TV.

"Jim," Shirely said plaintively, "don't! For pity's sake. It's a good movie."

"She's got to stop it," he said. "That's all. I can't take it any more."

"You can't run her life, Jim, Lee's almost eighteen. She'll be in college next year."

"That boy." He smacked his right fist into the other palm. "He's got me surrounded. And he knows it. With the kids. And Lee," he said, looking at the graduation picture they had set prematurely on the bookshelf, recalling the enormous, heady love he'd felt when she'd been born, when the nurse had brought her out, squirming, glistening with oil, for him to see the first time.

Tiger, tiger, he thought illogically. Burning bright and handsome. "Where was it they went?"

"To Fred's house. His daughter's having a little party. They'll be home in thirty minutes. Link's always had her in on time. Always."

She rose briskly, still wearing those provocative shorts, and flipped off the TV. "I'll fix you some cocoa," she said. "It'll feel good on a chilly night like this."

"Fine." He followed her into the kitchen, watching in silence as she deftly prepared the hot chocolate and cinnamon toast. When they were finished, after talking about the garden and such, though it was hard for Jim to concentrate, she came to him, putting her arms around him, curling up on his lap.

"Jim," she said, "don't fret. Please don't."

He laughed. "Just what do you have in mind?"

"Have I told you recently?"

"What?"

"That I love you?"

He thought Shirley was asleep when he heard the car slide into the driveway, its motor a low thunder, mingling with the surf's steady beat. "You see?" she said, her mouth moving against his bare shoulder. "I told you. On time."

He looked where his eyes had been straying for the past fifteen minutes, at the luminous hands of the clock.

"Thirty minutes late," he said. "And that hot rod is another thing. The kids call them bombs. And they are."

"Oh, hush," she said, stroking his cheek. "And go to sleep. You have school tomorrow."

Both Lee and the boy were in his seventh period class, a time when he was already irritable. It was too much, he thought, as he went in to face the group, after a quick cigarette in the janitor's room. Accel-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

erated classes were fine, but having to cope with all that untamed brilliance at two of a hot afternoon, after four other classes, that was too much.

That was probably why it happened, he told himself. His weariness. And the unnaturally still heat.

The lecture was complicated, a tie-in between set theory and symbolic logic. But it went fine at first, the kids taking it in with that intense silence that told him, nearly always, when he was teaching well. He didn't even hear the whisper, not at first, because he had to face the blackboard most of the time. It crept into his awareness gradually, like the whine of a gnat when you're concentrating on tying a trout fly.

Then he saw it was Link, talking to his own daughter, to Lee; but he ignored it, because he didn't want to break the equation he was working on, didn't want to, that is, until he turned and saw the fine, muscular hand on his daughter's bare shoulder, covering the thin strap that held up her cotton dress.

That did it. The heat and the weariness and the tension built up for two weeks. That hand did it.

"Ketterman," he said, coldly ferocious, "I can accept the rudeness that allows you to mumble throughout an important lecture. But I will not have you romancing in my class."

Lee went pale first, then flushed bright pink. Her hands were rigid on her desk top. But the boy, Link. He smiled. Smiled and slowly, slowly, lifted the hand away from Lee's shoulder.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Hunter," he said. "But Lee forgot her book. I didn't know you were so sensitive."

Jim wanted to hit him. He wanted to stride down the aisle and hit that bland face until it bled. But, trembling, he put his knuckles on his desk top and stared into the velvet eyes.

"Get out," he said. "You can come back when you're ready to apologize for your insolence."

The class, with only one nervous titter, watched Link gather his books with elaborate care and go, still smiling the slightest smile.

"All right," Jim said, "let's get back to—"

That was when Lee, hand to her quivering mouth, fled out of the room, scattering papers behind her. Jim watched her go, astonished, then went grimly on with his lecture, though his voice was trembling and he was certain that minds so recently witness to such juicy material for gossip would have little room for set theory.

He knew she'd be in after school. There was that kind of awareness between Lee and him, almost as close as that with Shirley. Maybe closer. He was whipping through the day's assignments, checking them off in the red gradebook, when he heard her at the door. She was on her dignity, chin tilted just a little.

"Can I help you?" he said. He

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tried to treat her like any other student.

"I wanted to see you about—" Her mouth trembled and she turned away. He could see her, by sheer force of nerve, pulling herself together. She turned back to him. "About what happened," she said.

"All right." He rose, pulling the extra chair around. "Sit down."

Her eyes were damp, but she looked directly at him, when she was seated, braving him, but with dignity. "I think you were cruel," she said.

"Maybe I was."

That surprised her. "Well," she said. "I think—*I* think *you* ought to apologize."

"For what?"

"For embarrassing Link and me. Everyone says it was mean. All the kids."

"I didn't mean to hurt you and I apologize," he said. "But not to the boy."

"It's that Electra thing they talk about in psychology class," she said, her voice too high. "That's what it is. You're fixated." Her voice trailed away. "On me."

Tense as he was, and weary, it was difficult to contain his laughter. "Maybe," he said. "Maybe there's a little of that. I've read the psychology books, Lee."

"Well, okay, but—"

"And that's not it," he said, "or only a small part, anyway. You've dated other boys, haven't you? Quite a few of them."

"Yes."

"I didn't say anything against them, did I?" It was true, he thought, relieved.

"Except Henry. You didn't like the way Henry gasped all the time. And you *knew* it was asthma."

He had to laugh. And she joined in, after a moment.

"Well," she said, "he *did* sound like a dying grampus. Whatever that is."

He was serious again. "But *this* boy, Lee," he said. "This Link—"

"I love him," she said, sitting very straight in her chair. "And I always will."

That got him. Deep and hard. It was pitifully touching.

"I admire your loyalty," he told her, after a moment. "I admire that. But, you're making a mistake. And I won't apologize. He was deliberately needling me. It was insolence. And none too subtle, either."

She knew when to let go. "If you say so, Daddy." She rose. "Mother asked me to remind you about the upholstery stuff. For your big chair."

"Oh," he said. "Sure. Does she know I'll be home late? That I have the report to get ready for tonight's board meeting? I'll get something at the diner."

"I'll remind her."

"See you tonight." He watched her go out the door, a lovely young woman so soon. Then he threw himself into his work, trying to forget it all, that velvet-eyed tiger

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stuff. Maybe he was just stirring up dust.

It was seven-thirty before he left the school, the report on the new math classes finished and signed, lying on the principal's desk. That's good, anyway, he thought, having that out of the way.

A thick, cottony fog had wrapped itself around the town. He regretted a little having left the car with Shirley, though he had had to, really, since it was two hundred miles past the greasing point. He'd better not forget that upholstery gear, he thought. She'd be peeved and he was too tired for any nagging.

It was one of the nights the stores were open. That was something he could not get straight. When it was Saturday, he thought, things were simpler. Street lights and store fronts bloomed through the fog like supernal flowers as he turned the corner onto the main street. He found himself strangely at peace.

Until he saw the electric-blue bomb sitting, open-topped, in front of the auto-parts store, its chrome glistening damply.

He felt the stare and turned to meet it, a little prickle of something not quite fear running up his back to his scalp. Link Ketterman. He was staring, the brown eyes steady and relentless, through the window of the store, staring right at Jim. He smiled faintly, and turned back toward the clerk, who had come out from between the metal shelves with some esoteric piece of machinery in his hand.

Tiger, tiger, Jim thought, all of it rushing back, all the frustrated terror for his family and himself. It's hopeless, he told himself. Hopeless. He's brilliant, much more so than I. And he's hard. Growing up in all those foster homes did that. The foster homes and the orphanage. It takes love to make the little animals that children are into human beings. And Link had missed that.

Jim turned into the fancy little interior decorator's shop without quite being aware of it. The owner, a mannered woman in her fifties, greeted him almost at the door, her hands clasped with the fervor of her work.

"Your wife called and said you'd be in, Mr. Hunter."

"What?"

"Your wife. She said you'd pick up the package. You *are* the right Mr. Hunter, aren't you?"

"Oh. Yes. I was wool-gathering. I'm the right Hunter."

"I thought I remembered. You were so distinguished when you spoke at the club. About logic and all that. And I understood just every bit of it. I really did."

"Thank you," Jim said. "It was—"

"Now, there's the cloth," she said, dragging the stuff out of a drawer, "in that package. And in this bag are the tacks, and thread, and," she looked around vaguely, "and I guess that's all."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Fine," Jim said. "Good night."

The fog was, if anything, thicker when he left the store. He heard, rather than saw, the car coming, as he angled across the street, and hurried to get out of its way. It was a strange engine sound, a muted, precise rumble, like tympani, perhaps. Or like distant surf.

It slid past him, electric-blue, glistening, just as he reached the curb. Link didn't so much as turn his head Jim's way. But he knows I'm here, Jim thought.

It rattled him. But, really, Jim told himself, what's there to be afraid of? He had called home from the diner. The little kids were there, safe, doubtless in bed by now. And Lee was studying, Shirley had said. It would be all right.

Then he remembered that he had to walk, through the blinding fog, up the canyon road. It was a one-lane road completely without lights, running through canyon walls so steep that nothing but a few tufts of grass grew there. The grass and one tenacious tree, stunted almost to shrub size, thrust horizontally out of one declivity.

And he knows, Jim told himself, that I haven't got the car.

He didn't see Fred Elkins go past, in one of the two police cars, until he was too far gone to hear a call. Hell, Jim thought. There was a ride home. Well, there's the taxi, he thought. But he dismissed that. I'm pressing too hard, he thought. Shirley's right. It's ridiculous.

He was almost calm when he turned off Pinetree Way into the canyon road. His ankle was hurting him a little. He thought about that, because it kept his mind off the other thing, and he thought about the way the board would receive his report. If they accepted it, the advanced classes would be a permanent thing. Good!

The fog, inside the narrow walls of the canyon, was compressed almost to tangibility, as if he could tear off shreds of it, like cotton candy. It's odd, he thought, that the sound of the surf is so clear on a night like this. Though not so odd. The sea was perhaps three hundred yards away, crow-flight.

Its muted, regular sound beat in faint reverberations against the high, narrow walls of the canyon, growing louder as, stumbling a little on the rough pavement, he hit the incline where for forty yards the road narrowed to car width, plus inches. Shirley had scraped the station wagon three or four times, just there, at the spot under the tough little tree that grew maybe eight feet up the wall.

It was too loud, that sound. He stopped. That's not the surf, he told himself, that's the boy's car. That boy is sitting up there, waiting for me. Waiting to catch me in this narrow, damned place.

Waiting to kill me. With a perfect alibi, in this fog. It was all an accident, he'll say. Poor Mr. Hunter.

The sound grew quicker, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pulse of the blue bomb up there. Well, he knows I'm here, Jim thought. Doubtless he timed me. And he certainly heard me stumbling around down here. He reached out to the canyon wall. There should be a rock right here—There was. It was roughly cool beneath his hand.

Lights went on then—two fierce flowers blooming in the fog, low to the ground, and yellow. Jim heard another engine sound behind him and thought, despairingly, for God's sake, has he got a friend in on this?

But there was no time for that. Up there in the fog, behind the twin yellow glare, the engine roared. Tires screeched against the pavement. Oh, be there where I think you are, Jim prayed. Just be there. He dropped the bundle of upholstering material.

He waited until he thought his nerve would break, already in the old crouch. The headlights, roaring, spun fiercely toward him, blossoming yellowly outward into the fog.

He'll get me now, he thought. I won't make it. But the leap was smooth, as he had hoped, and his hands met the trunk of the little tree firmly. He swung his legs up and out, remembering the gymnastics with blind, muscular memory.

Wind from the car tugged at him as he hit the top of the swing. It roared away beneath him. He was almost full circle, loop the loop, when the little tree, strained beyond endurance, broke away from the canyon wall, dropping him to the ground in a shower of dirt and rocks.

At first he wasn't sure about the noise. He thought it was in his head, from the fall. And he was already thinking ahead to when the boy would come back. The carpet tacks, he thought. I'll find them and spread them across the road. And run. Maybe they'll get his tires.

But it became clear to him that the sound was that of two cars hitting, or of glass and metal anyway, meeting with a lot of force. It wasn't in his head at all. And that was Fred Elkins' voice.

"Jim!" he was yelling. "Jim Hunter!"

"All right, Fred," he called, almost mildly. "I'm coming." That drop had really got his ankle this time. It hurt like the wound at Aachen. Almost as bad, anyway.

One light was still blazing dimly on Fred's car. The bomb was capsized, folded at an angle against the canyon wall at a place where there was almost room for two cars to pass. Fred, blood all over one side of his face, was helping the boy to his feet. "I oughta break your back," he said. "You animal."

I tried to tell him that, Jim thought, laughing a little, nervously. "What're you doing here?" he asked Fred.

"I was almost home," Fred said. "When I remembered that I saw him coming up this way. And that you didn't have the car."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He couldn't know that, Jim thought, too weary to say anything.

"Shirley called me, right before I left the office. She was worried. I think the thing at the cove upset her. Yesterday, I mean."

"She didn't tell me that."

"You know how women are," Fred said, wiping at his face with his sleeve. "They talk to everyone but their husbands. Anyway, I was coming up here to get you, when this," and he gestured at Link, "smashed into me. Boy," he said. "I thought he had you. How in the world did he miss you? There's no place—"

"That little tree up on the canyon wall. I jumped and grabbed it." It sounded easy, Jim thought. Miracles often do.

Link stood there in the dim, white glare of the headlights, caught in the swirls of fog that eddied through the canyon. He stood there looking at his ruined car. He clutched with a bloody hand at the arm, which hung limply from the shoulder.

"You totaled it," he said, "you lousy cop. You know what that car cost?"

"About twenty years," Fred said, "at an offhand guess. But maybe you'll be lucky."

"Wise guy. I had almost three thousand in it. Three thousand lousy bucks. And it's totaled now. Except for maybe the engine."

The slap Fred gave him wasn't hard, but Link whimpered slightly. "I'll get you for that," he said. "For that brutality." He talked through clenched teeth. "My arm is broken. But I'll get you."

"Ah," Fred said disgustedly. Maybe a little ashamed, Jim thought. He lifted a big hand again, but dropped it.

"Take it easy, Fred," Jim told him.

"Sure. I'd better call in. Get an ambulance for him. You all right?"

"Yeah. A little in the ankle, but that's all."

Fred went to the police car, tried to open a squawking door, ducked back from a shower of glass, cursed, and went around to the other side. Jim could hear him on the radio as he turned to the boy.

"I'm sorry about all this, Link," Jim said. "I really am."

For just a moment the boy was his old smooth self. "You know it was all an accident, don't you, Mr. Hunter? I mean, it was one of those things."

Jim got almost angry again, at that. But he pushed it back. God, the boy couldn't help it. "You tried to kill me. It was no accident."

Jim had heard vile language before, in the army and elsewhere, and had used some of it himself. But nothing to approach what poured from the boy's contorted face. Or not a boy, he thought. Not really. The skin of the boy peels back and the tiger comes forth.

When the boy paused, shuddering, for breath, Jim said, "Maybe someone can help you, Link. I hope so. Anyway," he said, "I'm sorry."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The boy was weeping as Jim turned away, weeping and clutching the broken arm. I can't do anything for him, Jim thought, not now, anyway, either physically, spiritually, or psychologically. He met Fred coming out of the car.

"I'm going home," he said, "to get some rest."

"You think you'll make it on that ankle?"

"Sure. I'll come down in the morning and see you about all this." He waved his hand at the two cars and the weeping boy.

Now, Jim thought, as he limped away up the incline, now for the worst part. Telling Lee about all this. He could hear the siren in the fog-dumb distance, just as the boy called out after him. "Hunter!" he shrieked. "I'll get you, Hunter! If it takes forever!"

Maybe you will, Jim thought. Tiger, tiger. It'll be tough because she loves him, he told himself. But it could have been a lot worse. She could have married him.

Relief washed over him that it wasn't so. His step, even with the ankle, quickened as the lights of his house dazzled out at him through the fog, over the little knoll at the top of the last curve. Boy, he thought. It's good to be here. I can really use a cup of that cocoa.

NEXT MONTH...

Winner of a Second Prize
DOROTHY SALISBURY DAVIS'
By the Scruff of the Soul

a new Mr. Campion story
MARGERY ALLINGHAM'S *Murder Under the Mistletoe*

a literary "discovery"
RING LARDNER'S *Stop Me—If You've Heard This One*

and other first-rate stories including
VICTOR CANNING'S *The Carnation Anniversary*
EDGAR LUSTGARTEN'S *Forbidden Fruit*
BAYNARD KENDRICK'S *A Clue from Bing Crosby*

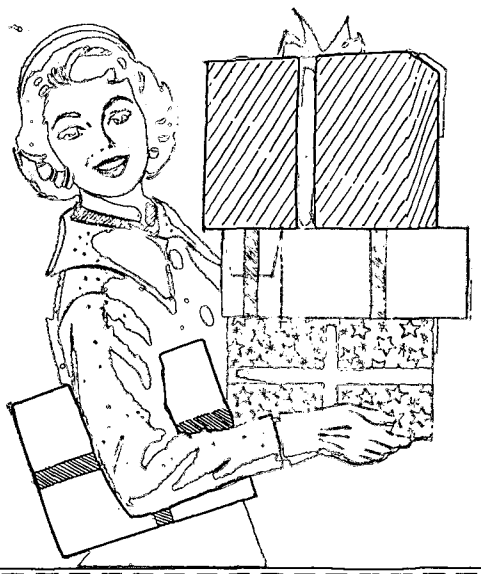
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

INDEX TO VOLUME FORTY—JULY-DECEMBER 1962

ALBEE, G. S.: The Talking Tree Oct. 20
ARMSTRONG, CHARLOTTE: The Other Shoe ..... July 23
AUSTIN, MARGARET: Introducing Ellery's Mom ..... July 5
Murder at Merryoak ..... Oct. 111
BABB, S.: That Presence Out There Sept. 38
BANKIER, WILLIAM: What Happened in Act One ..... July 36
BANKS, RICHARD: Roboticide Squad Dec. 102
BARRETT, WILLIAM E.: Nobody Would Believe It ..... July 55
BEHNEY, L. E.: On the Road to Jericho ..... Aug. 48
BIGGLE, JR., L.: Death in His Eyes Nov. 53
BOND, R.: Tear a Passion to Tatters Dec. 89
BOUCHER, ANTHONY: Best Mysteries of the Month ..... July - Dec.
BOYD, C.: An Accident of Time .. July 69
BRETT-SURMAN, M: Not a Bit Like Television ..... Sept. 87
CARLETON, MARJORIE: Monday Is a Quiet Place ..... Aug. 117
CARTER, YOUNGMAN: The Most Wanted Man in the World .. Nov. 120
CHILD, CHARLES B.: The Caller After Death ..... July 76
CHRISTIE, AGATHA: The $1,000,000 Bond Robbery ..... Aug. 12
The Time Hercule Poirot Failed Nov. 13
CURTISS, U.: Tiger by the Tail ... Sept. 105
DANIELS, HAROLD R.: Inquest on a Dead Tiger ..... Sept. 6
DANIELS, NORMAN: Strictly a Neighborhood Problem .... Aug. 39
Father Keough's Decision .... Nov. 82
DAVIDSON, AVRAM: Revolver ... Oct. 5
DURHAM, JOHN: Tiger ..... Dec. 116
EDWARDS, K. T.: A Matter of Judgment ..... Oct. 87
ELLIN, STANLEY: The Question My Son Asked ..... Nov. 5
ELLSON, HAL: The Last Answer .. Oct. 72
ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN: The Mysterious Sketch ..... Aug. 66
FAIRMAN, P. W.: Any Man's Death Oct. 91
FAY, WILLIAM: Cop With a Conscience ..... Aug. 83
FESSIER, M.: To Die at Midnight July 44
FISH, ROBERT L.: Adventure of the Missing Prince ..... July 100
FLETCHER, D.: The Walewska Cross ..... Oct. 76
GOLDSTEIN, HERB: Go Play With Your Sister ..... July 89
HAY, J.: Reformation of Fogarty .. Dec. 38
HECHT, BEN: Miracle of the Fifteen Murderers ..... Sept. 91
HELVICK, JAMES: Total Recall .. Aug. 105
HIGHSMITH, P.: The Terrapin .... Oct. 99
HOCH, E. D.: Death in the Harbor Dec. 19
HOLDING, JAMES: The Photographer and the Undertaker Nov. 25
JOHNS, VERONICA PARKER: Green Goose Chase ..... Oct. 62
KELLAND, CLARENCE BUDINGTON: The Inconspicuous Man .... Nov. 65
KEMELMAN, HARRY: The Man With the Two Watches ... July 120
KERSH, GERALD: A Deal in Overcoats ..... July 108
The Unkillable Man ..... Sept. 35
KJELGAARD, JIM: A Fair Bet .... Dec. 34
KNOWLTON, DON: The Curious Quints ..... Aug. 93
LATNER, P. W.: Trouble House .. Nov. 103
LUDENS, MAGNUS: The Red Eggs Aug. 56
MCGERR, PAT: Murder to the Twist ..... Oct. 16
MILLAR, MARGARET: The People Across the Canyon ..... Oct. 32
NEAL, H. C.: The Pegasus Pilfer Nov. 109
NEBEL, F.: Needle in a Haystack Aug. 20
O'HARA, JOHN: The Public Career of Mr. Seymour Harrisburg Nov. 46
PANGBORN, EDGAR: Beyond a Reasonable Doubt ..... Oct. 50
PENTECOST, HUGH: A Kind of Murder ..... Aug. 5
Cop's Job To Know ..... Sept. 72
The Man With the Sixteen Beards ..... Dec. 63
PICKERING, R.: A Lesson in Logic Nov. 92
PORGES, ARTHUR: Do You Believe in Astrology? ..... Aug. 78
POWELL, T.: Somebody Cares .... Dec. 77
QUEEN, E.: Mind Over Matter ... Sept. 46
RICHTER, JOAN S.: The Lavender Ones Taste Better ..... Sept. 81
The White Elephant ..... Sept. 84
RUBIN, RICK: Alpine Assignment Nov. 37
SLESAR, HENRY: Mr. Justice .... Sept. 61
STONE, T. P.: A Time for Tea ... July 94
STURGEON, T.: In the Hospital ... Dec. 100
THOMAS, DYLAN: The Old Woman Upstairs ..... Aug. 35
ULLMAN, JAMES M.: The Stock Market Detective ..... Dec. 5
VAN DOREN, MARK: This Other Honor ..... Sept. 26
WALSH, THOMAS: Homecoming .. Dec. 50
ZUROY, M.: Mooney Versus Cat .. Oct. 45

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Shopping for the ideal gift?



There's no better gift than a gift o mystery . . . and when the gift yo give is ELLERY QUEEN'S MYS TERY MAGAZINE—you have give the best there is. Starting in March EQMM will feature a short novel— and you'll find a short novel in every month's issue.

Here is one of Santa's best sugges tions: use the order form below t order gift subscriptions to EQMM for your friends. They'll receive cop ies every month — a gift that say Merry Christmas all year 'round.

AND, twice during the year, they wil also receive a copy of ELLERY QUEEN'S ANTHOLOGY — a collec tion of the world's greatest mysteries

ELLERY QUEEN'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE 505 PARK AVENUE NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Enter these gift subscriptions as marked below for a full year of EQMM

One 1 year gift, plus 2 Anthologies $6

Each additional gift, plus 2 Anthologies $5

(Add $1.00 outside U.S.A. and Canada)

☐ Payment Enclosed ☐ Send Bill January 1

☐ Send Christmas Card

YOUR NAME _____ (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZONE ____ STATE _____

SEND GIFT TO:

NAME _____ (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZONE ____ STATE _____

SEND GIFT TO:

NAME _____ (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZONE ____ STATE _____

SEND GIFT TO:

NAME _____ (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZONE ____ STATE _____

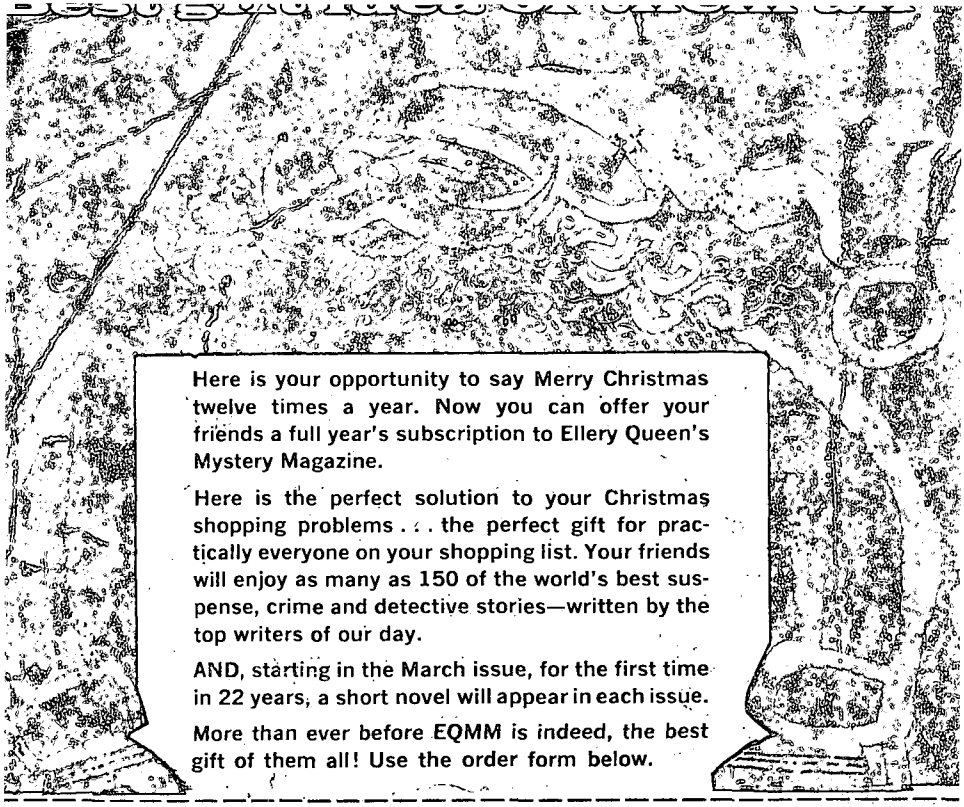
SEND GIFT TO:

NAME _____ (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZONE ____ STATE _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Here is your opportunity to say Merry Christmas twelve times a year. Now you can offer your friends a full year's subscription to Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine.

Here is the perfect solution to your Christmas shopping problems . . . the perfect gift for practically everyone on your shopping list. Your friends will enjoy as many as 150 of the world's best suspense, crime and detective stories—written by the top writers of our day.

AND, starting in the March issue, for the first time in 22 years, a short novel will appear in each issue.

More than ever before EQMM is indeed, the best gift of them all! Use the order form below.

USINESS
EPLY MAIL

POSTAGE STAMP NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES

FIRST CLASS
PERMIT No. 1050
NEW YORK, N. Y.

OSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY

ELLERY QUEEN'S
Mystery Magazine

505 PARK AVE./NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED